

Oust Ershad from alliance

Dr Milon's mother urges AL

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Mother of Dr Shamsul Alam Khan Milon, who was killed in 1990 by armed cadres of the then autocratic ruler HM Ershad, yesterday urged ruling Awami League to oust Ershad from its alliance for the sake of democracy.

Selina Akter also demanded trial of the Ershad-led government for her son's death.

She was addressing a discussion organised by Bangladesh Medical Association (BMA) on Dhaka Medical College (DMC) premises marking Dr Milon's death anniversary.

"We saw people give their lives away during the anti-autocratic movement of 1990. BNP and Awami League said they will not allow Ershad or his associates to join democratic parties. But, Awami League is now allied with Ershad and he speaks for democracy at parliament," she said.

AL lawmaker Mostafa Jalal Mohiuddin, who was the BMA secretary general in 1990, said, "We also do not want a dictator in power but all of us should understand that the situation now is different."

Meanwhile, different organisations also observed the 22nd death anniversary of Dr Milon.

Bangabandhu Sangskritik Jote placed wreath at Milon's memorial monument in front of DMC. They also arranged a discussion at their Gulshan office.

Workers Party of Bangladesh, Bangladesh Jubo Moitree, Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal, Samajtantrik Chhatra Front and Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal backed Bangladesh Chhatra League also observed Dr Milon's death anniversary.

Govt to bring back all money siphoned off by Tarique, Koko

Says prime minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said her government would bring back from abroad all the money siphoned off by the two sons of BNP chief Khaleda Zia.

"We'll bring all the money back gradually," she told a views exchange meeting with the leaders of her party's Sunamganj district unit.

The government has recently brought back part of the money siphoned off by Arafat Rahman Koko, younger son of the opposition leader, from Singapore, she said.

Hasina, also president of the ruling Awami League, criticised the past BNP-Jamaat government, saying that the coalition government from 2001 to 2006 looted public money, grabbed funds from [Zia] orphanage, and siphoned off the money abroad.

The entire country had plunged into the dark abyss of corruption, terrorism, militancy and extremism during the BNP-Jamaat government, she said.

Hasina also listed successes of her government and said the people got something when the AL remained in power. BNP's motto is to loot public money, she added.

Terming the AL a pro-people organisation, Hasina urged the party leaders and activists to work more cordially for the greater wellbeing of the people.

Claiming that the elections are held in a free, fair and credible manner under AL rule, she said people would decide who would come to power through the next poll.

The AL government always believes in the constitution and democratic rights of the people and that's why it did not pock its nose into the Tangail by-election, she said.

"People didn't vote for the Awami League candidate. So we lost the election. But we didn't go there to rig votes as done by the previous [BNP-Jamaat] government."

She claimed that more than 6,000 different kinds of elections had taken place under the present government in the last four years, and all of those were free and fair.

Quotas for Harijans at education instts sought

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a programme yesterday urged the government to preserve quotas at all government educational institutions for students from the underprivileged and discriminated Harijan community.

The Harijan children are being deprived of their rights to education, as they are not easily allowed in educational institutions, they told a reception ceremony hosted for the community's 133 meritorious students who passed the SSC and HSC examinations this year.

Bangladesh Harijan Oikya Parishad and FAIR, a local NGO, in association with Manusher Jonno Foundation, organised the event at the capital's Jatiya Press Club.

Rashed Khan Menon, chief of the parliamentary body on the education ministry, said he would encourage the education ministry to introduce a quota system for the community's students at all educational institutions.

He said the government had taken some initiatives to improve life in the community, but they were not getting the benefits due to flawed implementation.

Menon welcomed Dhaka University authorities' decision to preserve one percent of the seats as quota for Harijan students.

Dr Shamsul Bari, chairman, Research Initiatives Bangladesh, said there was no way to eliminate discriminations against Harijans until their children got educated.

The society has a responsibility to create opportunity for these meritorious children so that they could contribute to their community as well as to the country, said Aroma Dutta, member of National Human Rights Commission.

Student unions polls demanded for fighting communalism

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Authorities of all the public universities should arrange students' union elections to strengthen the movement against fundamentalism and communalism in the country, said speakers at a discussion in the capital yesterday.

Students of the universities are being deprived of their rights due to inactivity of the unions, they said.

The nation is also losing the opportunity of producing efficient and skilled leadership for not holding elections to the unions, they added.

Bangladesh Chhatra Union (BCU), a left-leaning student organisation, organised the discussion titled "Democratic atmosphere in educational institutes: Perspective student's union election" on the Dhaka University (DU) campus.

With BCU President SM Shuba in the chair, Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) President Mujahidul Islam Selim, noted economist Prof Anu Muhammad, DU teacher Kaberi Gayen, Bangladesh Chhatra League President HM Badiuzzaman Shohag, among others, spoke on the occasion.

Road crashes kill 3, injure 7

METRO DESK

Three people, including a Grameen Bank official, were killed and at least seven people injured in separate road accidents in Dhaka, Bagerhat and Jhalakathi yesterday.

Our staff correspondent reports, a bus skidded off the road and plunged into a roadside canal in Ashulia on the outskirts of the capital yesterday afternoon, injuring at least five people.

The Abdullahpur-bound bus fell

into Moragonga canal after its driver lost control over the steering near Ashulia Bazar around 3:45pm, Ashulia Police Station Officer-in-Charge Badrul Alam Sheikh told The Daily Star.

A correspondent from Bagerhat reports, a Grameen Bank official died after a motorcycle hit him on Khan Jahan Ali road in Bagerhat town yesterday morning.

The deceased Nurul Aslam Hawladar, 45, son of Azim Uddin Hawladar of Jhalakathi, was the man

ager of Bagerhat sadar upazila's Depara Bazar Branch of the bank.

He was rushed to Bagerhat Sadar Hospital and, later, shifted to Khulna Medical College Hospital where he died around 1:00pm.

A correspondent from Jhalakathi reports, Shaheb Ali, 56, was killed and two others were injured as an engine-run three-wheeler (locally known as tomtom) overturned on Kathalia-Bhandaria highway at Bandakata yesterday morning.

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