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## Chhatra League BANNED

Citing section of anti-terror act, govt issues gazette that takes effect immediately

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The interim government last night banned Bangladesh Chhatra League amid demands from the student movement against discrimination.

The home ministry issued a gazette notification with immediate effect, stating that the government invoked the Anti-Terrorism Act-2009 to ban BCL, a 76-year-old pro-Awami League student organisation.

The move comes a day after the students issued an ultimatum to the government, saying that they will take to the streets unless the BCL was banned within this week.

Several hundred students demonstrating in front of the Dhaka University vice chancellor's office cheered as the news of the ban came.

The AL, BCL and a leftist party leader condemned the move.

Abdul Kader, a coordinator of the student movement, announced near the TSC that students would march and distribute sweetmeat on university campuses across the country in celebration at 3:00pm today.

According to the gazette, the government made the decision as per section 18 (1) of the Anti-Terrorism Act 2009 and listed the BCL as a banned entity.

The section reads: "For the purposes of this act, the government, on reasonable grounds that a person or an entity is involved in terrorist activities, may, by order, enlist the person in the schedule or proscribe the entity and enlist it in the schedule."



A four-layer security measure being implemented in front of the Bangabhaban yesterday, a day after protesters demanding the removal of President Mohammed Shahabuddin tried to scale the barricades.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

## No doubt AL should be banned

Says Nahid

JU CORRESPONDENT

The Awami League has no right to engage in politics, said Information and Broadcasting Adviser Nahid Islam yesterday.

"There should be no doubt about whether the Awami League's political activities should be banned. In a democratic state, no fascist party has the right to engage in politics," he said.

The adviser was speaking at a discussion titled "The Government of Mass Uprising: Expectations and Achievements" at Jahangirnagar University.

Nahid said, "The Awami government carried out a massacre to politically suppress our rightful quota movement. Over the past 16 years, neither our



SEE PAGE 7 COL 4

## The plot thickens over calls for the president to quit

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP and the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement seem to be at odds over the removal of President Mohammed Shahabuddin.

The interim government, meantime, has yet to clarify its stance on the issue.

After a meeting between a BNP delegation and Chief Adviser Prof Mohammad Yunus around noon yesterday, the party said vacancy in the president's post at this moment would put "the state in a crisis and create a constitutional vacuum", which the nation does not desire.

Briefing reporters outside the state guesthouse Jamuna, BNP standing committee member Nazrul Islam Khan, said his party had urged the government to make sure there was no constitutional vacuum or crisis.

"If the lackeys of the fallen autocrat try to create any constitutional and political crisis, the pro-democracy political parties and different organisations will face it together," Nazrul said, urging everyone to be cautious so that a new constitutional or political crisis is not created.

Law Adviser Asif Nazrul and special assistant to the chief adviser Mahfuj Alam were present at the meeting.

Queried by journalists about the BNP's opinion regarding the demand for the president's resignation, Asif Nazrul said, "Nothing specific. We have said everyone should be careful so that no new constitutional or political crisis is created. If anyone wants to do that, we will face it together."

Nazrul Islam Khan, along with BNP standing committee



SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

## BNP wary of constitutional vacuum

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

The BNP appears to be apprehensive about the sudden controversy over the resignation letter of ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina.

The party, which had been on the receiving end of severe persecution by the Awami League during its 15-year rule, is keeping a close watch on the developments surrounding the issue that has arisen two and a half months after the interim government took over.

SEE PAGE 7 COL 1

## NEWS ANALYSIS

FATE OF 62 ASPs

## Who's calling the shots?

WASIM BIN HABIB

The stage was all set. The Bangladesh Police Academy at Sardah was decked up for the year's highlight. Another batch of assistant superintendents was about to pass out. Many of the guests and dignitaries had already arrived in Rajshahi the evening before. They would watch 62 ASPs — all BCS recruits — march in their passing-out parade.

Home Adviser Lt Gen (ret'd) Jahangir Alam Chowdhury was scheduled to inspect the parade, as the chief guest, and set off the ceremony. He would have the police chief Md Mainul Islam with him, along with senior government officials. The day's ceremonies would conclude with probationary postings for the ASPs.

However, the parade was suspended for "unavoidable circumstances" the night before it was scheduled. The organisers did not offer any explanation for the sudden decision. Nor did the home adviser provide any clear explanation.

Jahangir only managed to say, "It has already been explained... stay well," when reporters asked him why the parade had been postponed during a press conference at the Rajshahi Metropolitan Police Headquarters on the day of the parade.

It was, however, evident that the home adviser was unaware of the imminent suspension, as were the organisers. Otherwise, the invitations would not have been sent and guests like the home adviser would not have made the trip.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

- Chhatra League was founded in January 1948
- It played significant roles in 1952 Language Movement, 1966 Six-point Movement, 1969 uprising and 1971 Liberation War
- It was also at the forefront of anti-Ershad movement
- From 2009-2024, it made headlines for involvement in tender business, campus violence, torture and killing
- During the 2018 Road Safety Movement and July 2024 uprising, its activists carried out merciless attacks on students

There is evidence that the BCL has been involved in different conspiratorial, subversive and terrorist activities against the state since the fall of the AL government on August 5, reads the notification.

It adds that the BCL, a "brotherly" organisation of AL, was involved in activities that go against public security; the crimes include murder, torture, and oppression of students at dorm rooms informally known as "gono rooms". A large number of students stay in cramped conditions in such rooms.

The BCL took money for dormitory rooms, manipulated tender, raped and sexually harassed women, and committed other crimes after the country's independence, particularly in the last 15 years of the AL's autocratic regime, it adds.

Information and evidence of these crimes were widely covered by the media. Involvement of some BCL leaders and activists in criminal activities were proved at courts too, it says.

During the student movement in July this year, BCL leaders indiscriminately attacked protesting students and the general public, killing hundreds and endangering the lives of many others, the notification adds.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

## TRIAL FOR MASSACRE Extradition only if death penalty abolished

Says HRW

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With an arrest warrant out for ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina, Bangladesh's interim government should amend the International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) Act to ensure a fair and impartial judicial process, Human Rights Watch (HRW) said.

Before moving ahead with trials, the interim government should adopt a moratorium on the death penalty and take steps to abolish capital punishment in line with international human rights law, the New York-based rights organisation said in a letter to the law, justice and parliamentary affairs ministry on Monday.

Unless the Bangladesh

SEE PAGE 2 COL 2



Several villages and thousands of bighas of cropland in Khulna's Dacope upazila have gone under water after tidal pressures broke down the Bhadra river's embankment there last Friday. The area is at further risk as coastal districts have been warned about the incoming Cyclone Dana, which is expected to make landfall between today afternoon and early tomorrow and impact the Sundarbans region. The photo was taken from Lokkhikhola village in the upazila recently.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

## US ready for woman president: Harris

Biden says Trump should be 'politically' locked up

AFP, Washington

Kamala Harris said Tuesday that America is "absolutely" ready to elect its first woman president but downplayed her historic bid, saying she simply wants to turn the page for a nation "exhausted" by Donald Trump.



With two weeks to Election Day, Harris and Trump are saturating swing states with rallies and taking to the airwaves and podcasts on the hunt for an advantage in a race that polls suggest is effectively tied.

Speaking on the national NBC network, Harris responded "absolutely" when asked if America was ready to elect its first woman — but also noted her candidacy was about "turning the page."

"People are exhausted with Donald Trump and his approach, because it's all about himself," she said.

Trump, speaking to supporters in North Carolina,

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1