

No place for AL in NCP
Says Akhtar Hossain
OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Dinajpur

If any member of Awami League attempts to infiltrate the National Citizen Party, they will be resisted and handed over to the law, said the party's Member Secretary Akhtar Hossain.

"If anyone from Awami League dares to associate themselves with the NCP, they will face consequences. We will take firm action to protect our movement and ideals," Akhtar said.

Anyone who has imposed fascism on Bangladesh has no moral right to participate in the country's politics, he also said.

He made the remarks on Friday night while talking to journalists following a discussion meeting with NCP organisers at the Rangpur Chamber Building.

Akhtar also said the party will never accept any attempt to rehabilitate Awami League, accusing the party of committing genocide and crimes against humanity.

In response to a question about the NCP's relationship with

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River land grabbed for farming

SOHRAB HOSSAIN, Patuakhali

Locals have allegedly been encroaching on the Rabnabad river in Patuakhali's Galachipa upazila to cultivate watermelon.

During a recent visit to the area near the Galachipa launch terminal, this correspondent observed that a vast stretch of the riverbank had been elevated using soil extracted from the riverbed and riverbank areas to grab the river's land.

Watermelon cultivation has already begun on parts of the occupied land.

Some residents alleged that the illegal grabbing is being carried out without any obstruction from the upazila administration. Sources claimed that some officials of the upazila land office are facilitating the occupation in exchange for bribes.

Saeed Talukdar, a local farmer cultivating watermelon on portion of the grabbed land, said his wife, Tasmin Akther Jhumur -- an elected member of Golkhali Union Parishad -- had received a temporary lease of three acres from the upazila administration.

He admitted to elevating the

riverbank to protect the crops from tidal water but could not provide any document or details regarding the lease.

Another farmer said they had to pay the land office to cultivate watermelon on the riverbank area but declined to

mention the amount paid as bribe.

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meeting of the National Task Force for River Protection in January 2010 also decided to evict illegal structures from the area.

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Devotees take part in Ashtami Snan ritual

STAR REPORT

Thousands of Hindu devotees yesterday performed Ashtami Snan, a ritual of bathing in the holy waters of the Brahmaputra river in different districts, including Narayanganj, Kurigram, and Mymensingh.

According to Hindu mythology, taking a dip in the Brahmaputra during a specific lunar period purifies sins and earns religious merit.

The Ashtami Snan is celebrated on the eighth day of the lunar month, which falls in the Bangla month of Chaitra. This year's bathing time began on Saturday at 2:08am and ended at 12:45am on Sunday, according to the Hindu Tithi.

In Langalbandh of Narayanganj, devotees from all over Bangladesh, as well as from countries like India, Nepal, and Bhutan, joined the religious event, seeking absolution from sin.

The organisers said bathing arrangements were made at twenty ghats stretching over a three-kilometre area across Bandar and Sonargaon upazilas.

This year, an estimated one million people attended the event, said Joy K Roy Chowdhury, an adviser of the Langalbandh Bathing Festival Celebration Committee.

Visitors brought with them ritual ingredients such as flowers, grasses, fruits, Tulsi leaves, and mango leaves, as they bathed in the Brahmaputra throughout the day.

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