

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.

In 2009, after a report titled "Markets being built on grabbed river land in Galachipa" was published in a national daily, the then shipping minister directed the ministry secretary to take action against illegal occupation of the Rabnabad river's land. A subsequent

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

Although some areas were reclaimed at the time, illegal occupation resumed in recent



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