

BNP expected foreigners' comments over CG, but none raised it: Hasan

July 15, 2023

Online Desk: Information and Broadcasting Minister Dr Hasan Mahmud on Friday said the BNP expected that the visiting foreign representatives would talk about a caretaker government and the resignation of the present government but none raised the issue. "This caretaker government issue was not raised in any conversation. The BNP's one-point demand is the resignation of the Awami League government and formation of a non-partisan government. They neither got any support for the demand from the people of Bangladesh nor from foreigners," he said, reports BSS.

Hasan, also Joint General Secretary of Bangladesh Awami League (AL), said this while replying to queries from journalists after delivering a speech as the chief guest at a certificate-distribution ceremony of the Computer Science-Breeze programme on the UG campus of the Asian University for Women in Chattogram. The programme was organised in cooperation with Stanford University of the United States.

Noting that only a free and fair election was discussed during talks with foreign representatives, the minister said even the issue of inclusive elections for all did not come up in the discussion. "Definitely, we want the participation of all political parties, including the BNP in the next election. We want to contest the polls with everyone," he said. He said Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's government will perform its routine duties during the election and the election will be held under the Election Commission in line with the country's constitution.

Asked about BNP's 31-point demand, Hasan said BNP announced one point the day before yesterday and the next day they declared 31 points. He said the BNP's Wednesday's demand for the resignation of the government is not a new one. "I have been hearing about their one-point movement since 2013. It is like changing the shell of a snake and playing the same drum over the years. There is nothing new," he added. He said the BNP wanted to call a rally during the visit of a delegation from the European Union, the United States of America and other countries with a view to showing the foreigners how many people they could gather in their rally.

The information minister said 30,000 people gathered in front of Nayapaltan and there were not more than 40,000 people there. AL gathered millions of people across three junctions within a 12-hour notice and everyone witnessed how much AL leader and activists in its peace rallies, he said.

Responding to another question about holding dialogue with all political parties, Hasan said the Election Commission (EC) is the authority to organise elections and so dialogue can certainly be with the EC. "If anyone wants to talk about the election, he or she will have to talk with the Election Commission. So, the BNP can approach the Election Commission to present their views. If the Election Commission calls us, we will also go there," he added.

Earlier, while delivering a speech as the chief guest, Hasan said he saw a big difference between other private universities with Asian University for Women, as students from many countries get enrollment in the university. "Students from Afghanistan, Myanmar, Thailand and many other countries come to study here and meritorious students are given full-bright scholarships here. After completing a four-year course of study, a student achieves a great transformation," he added.

The minister hoped the computer science-bridge programme would play an important role in the fourth industrial revolution. "The world's first industrial revolution was the invention of the steam engine. A hundred years later, railway operation began in India. The second industrial revolution was the generation of

electricity. The third industrial revolution was the invention of the computer. And the fourth industrial revolution is the entry into the world of ICT or robotics,” he added.

Dr Hasan said the AL raised the slogan of Digital Bangladesh as its election manifesto in 2008 while India and the UK did it in 2011.

“At present, 18 crores of mobile SIM cards are in use in Bangladesh, although our population is less than the number of subscriptions as one person is using multiple SIM cards. If someone wants to send money to a family from the Middle East, it is possible within an hour. A student from remote areas like Kutubdia, Maheshkhali or Shahparir Island can also join classes online from their respective residences. This is a Digital Bangladesh,” he said. Hasan called upon the university authorities to impart training to the students for this fourth industrial revolution.

“Apart from Bangladesh, students from different countries of the world are also getting ready for this university. Now you can organize international seminars on various topics which will be beneficial for the students. Besides, the reputation of this university will spread in the international arena as well,” he added.

Noting that Dr Kamal, the founder of the Asian University for Women, has expressed his interest in setting up an international standard medical school and hospital here, the minister said it needs some more land for that establishment. “I have talked about the issue with the district administration. You also continue the process from your position. If an international standard medical school and hospital can be built in Chattogram, students here as well as patients of Chattogram will get international standard treatment here.” he added.

Asian University for Women Vice-Chancellor Dr Rubana Hoq presided over the function while Pro-Vice-Chancellor David Taylor, Director of Computer Science Bridge Program Principal Shams Ahmed and Professor Shahadat Hossain, joining it online from Japan, spoke in the event. Later, the minister distributed certificates among the students of the course.