

Sixty-eight eminent citizens demand Mirza Fakhrul's release

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Online Desk: Sixty-eight eminent citizens of the country on Friday demanded the immediate release of BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir who was arrested on October 29.

In a joint statement, they also said Fakhrul's release could play an important role in eschewing political violence and creating a way for a fair and inclusive election.

The BNP general secretary was arrested from his Gulshan residence a day after serious political violence and clashes between the opposition activists and police at Nayaplatan on October 28 centring the party's grand rally that left two people, including a police constable, killed.

He was later sent to Keraniganj Central Jail as Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Md Rashidul Alam rejected his bail petition.

"The nation is now eager to establish a democratic political society. The current Prime Minister herself has also spoken about this commitment," the statement reads.

It said the demand for establishing a democratic society through holding the national election under the supervision of a neutral government within the next three months is getting stronger.

"At this very time, the arrest of Bangladesh Nationalist Party Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir has jeopardised the process of holding a peaceful, fair, and participatory election. It appears to us that Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir is a firm believer in peaceful political activities," the noted cotises observed

They also said Fakhrul's role is important in the peaceful conduct of political rivalry. "We believe that the release of Mirza Fakhrul can play an important role in avoiding conflict in politics and bringing back the practice of democratic norms."

In the stament, the eminent citizens hoped that the government would pave the way for a peaceful, neutral, and participatory election by immediately releasing the BNP secretary general.

The signatories of the statement include writer Badruddin Omar, economist Prof Wahiduddin Mahmud, ex-governor of Bangladesh Bank Dr Salehuddin Ahmed, educationists Prof Mahbub Ullah, Prof Anu Muhammad, Prof Anwarullah Chowdhury, Prof Ahmed Kamal, Prof Saidur Rahman, Prof AT M Nurul Amin, Prof Sadrul Amin, Prof Akmal Hossain, Prof AFM Yusuf Haider, Prof Tazmeri Islam, Prof Chowdhury Abrar, Prof. Dilara Chowdhury and Prof Morshed Hasan Khan.

The statement was sent to journalists by the BNP media cell and UNB could not independently verify whether all the 68 citizens signed it.