

‘Scrap polls schedule, create atmosphere for fair election first’: BNP

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Online Desk: The BNP on Saturday accused the government of a serious crackdown on opposition politics across the country with the aim of establishing an autocratic dictatorship since the country’s voters turned down the schedule announced by the Election Commission for the next national election.

Speaking at a virtual press briefing, BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Ruhul Kabir Rizvi called upon the Election Commission and the government to cancel the election schedule and create an atmosphere for holding a credible, inclusive and acceptable election in the country.

“The country’s 12 crore voters rejected with hatred the dictated election schedule announced by the Election Commission,” he said.

He said people who have been disenfranchised for the past 15 years have taken to the streets demanding the resignation of ‘despotic ruler Sheikh Hasina’, and for the installation of a non-partisan caretaker government to oversee the next polls.

“Fascist Sheikh Hasina is carrying out a big crackdown across the country to establish an autocratic dictatorship, by eliminating the nationalist forces and opposition parties and dissidents through a cunning blueprint after establishing her control over all the state apparatuses, including the judiciary, administration and police,” the BNP leader said.

He claimed that the police have been unleashed on the people like wolves to arrest the BNP leaders and activists and their family members.

“The astonishing evil efforts of the police have demonstrated that Sheikh Hasina’s government has become violent to create a destructive and lifeless situation and dull around for holding a lopsided election. As in the past, she wants to make the festival of vote robbery a success by confining the people of Bangladesh and evicting them from their homes,” Rizvi said.

He said police are raiding the houses of BNP leaders and activists to arrest them wholesale in ‘fictitious’ cases, forcing the opposition leaders and workers to leave their houses and villages.

The BNP leader also alleged that the law enforcers are also indulging in the ‘arrest trade’ by taking money from the BNP leaders and activists by showing them fear of arrest in ‘false’ cases.

“Sheikh Hasina gave them (police) license for the arrest business. Virtually the rule of law has been uprooted in the country. BNP leaders and activists are now living a miserable life in fear of getting arrested in ghost cases. The leaders and activists of the opposition parties have been treated as second-class citizens of the country,” he observed.

Rizvi warned that the government would not be able to resist its fall by carrying out the recession and since people have taken to the streets to restore their rights.

“If the election is not held under a non-partisan caretaker administration, the government must face fall. Immediately withdraw the election schedule you announced. Postpone elections and resign first. Otherwise, the country’s people will resist this dictated one-sided election with all their strengths, he said.

The BNP leader claimed that police have arrested 302 BNP leaders and activists across the country in the last 24 hours as of 5 pm Saturday.

That brought the total to 13,210 BNP leaders and activists arrested in various cases since October 28.