

No imposed law can interfere with parliament's sovereignty : Salahuddin

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Online Desk : BNP Standing Committee member Salahuddin Ahmed on Friday, November 14, said no imposed law, order or forced proposal can be allowed to interfere with the sovereignty of the National Parliament. "We do not want the sovereignty of the National Parliament to be undermined in any way. That is why we will not allow any imposed law, order or coercive proposal to interfere with Parliament's sovereignty," he said. Speaking at a pre-march silent rally at Shahbagh, Salahuddin said Parliament is the country's only sovereign House, representing the people. "Only the members elected by the people can exercise that sovereign authority." In Bangladesh, he said, discussions or proceedings of Parliament cannot be challenged in court. "We repeat that no proposal or imposed measure can be allowed to dictate or undermine the sovereignty of that National Parliament." Salahuddin, a BNP Standing Committee member, said their party welcomes the proposal to hold a referendum on the same day as the next national election, saying it would save time and cost and allow greater voter participation.

"But a referendum cannot be used to enact laws or amend the Constitution. For that, a National Parliament must be formed. We want the national election to be held in the first half of February. We want to exercise our right to vote, and the people of this country are eager to cast their votes freely and enthusiastically," he said. Referring to the July National Charter, Salahuddin reiterated that BNP is committed to implementing the charter exactly as it was written and signed on October 17. The rally titled "Growing Violence and Disrespect Against Women: Conscious Society Ready to Resist" was organised by the Women and Children Rights Forum in front of the National Museum at Shahbagh. After the rally, women participants covered their faces with black cloths and held a silent march from Shahbagh to the Central Shaheed Minar.

Salahuddin accused a certain religious political party of exploiting religion for political gain. "There is a party that does business in the name of religion, engages in political business, and wants to win votes by selling different kinds of 'tickets to heaven'. Women are now being oppressed at their hands." He said this party wants to confine women to their homes, keep half the population in darkness, and block women's progress. "They are calling for reduced working hours for women, claiming it will prevent inconvenience in employment. But reducing working hours will actually harm women's employment. If working hours are cut, many offices, institutions and factories will hesitate to hire women. Employment will decrease, not increase," the BNP leader warned.

Salahuddin said women must have the opportunity to work with dignity and prove their skills through full employment. "Those calling for reduced working hours have bad intentions. They want women confined. They do not want society to progress." He observed that the country can move forward only if both men and women progress equally and if their safety, dignity and opportunities are ensured in all sectors. Salahuddin said BNP has prepared a comprehensive plan for women based on its 31-point agenda, covering education, employment, security and housing.

He strongly condemned the recent assault on BNP women activists in Rajshahi, who were allegedly beaten and humiliated by supporters of a religious party. The BNP leader also criticised the case filed against a teacher of Jahangirnagar University for comments made during a talk show. "Her words offended a fanatical group, and they filed a case. We want a society where everyone is equal, without divisions based on religion, ethnicity, caste, culture or language."

Salahuddin said ensuring equal rights for all citizens is the true spirit of democracy, independence and sovereignty. "Our only identity should be that we are citizens of Bangladesh. There should be no majority-minority divisions or cultural or linguistic discrimination." He said the July uprising and past

movements were aimed at building such a Bangladesh, and the fight must continue to establish a strong democratic state free from discrimination.

The rally was chaired by BNP Standing Committee member and Forum convener Selima Rahman and conducted by member secretary Nipun Roy Chowdhury. Jahangirnagar University Professor Mehrin Islam Khan, PSC member Professor Chowdhury Saima Ferdous, former MPs Shirin Sultana, Nilufar Chowdhury Moni, Bilkis Islam and Mayer Daak platform coordinator Sanjida Islam Tuli, among others, spoke the programme.

Source: UNB