

Bangabandhu turned Awami League into people's party: Sheikh Selim

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The Daily Morning Voice Online Desk: Awami League (AL) Presidium Member Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim today said that Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman had turned the AL into a people's organization.

“When the AL was established in 1949, Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhasani was made the president, Shamsul Haque the general secretary and Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman the senior joint general secretary. Bangabandhu was imprisoned at that time. He was later released from jail,” he said. Sheikh Selim said this while addressing the AL's 22nd national council at the historic Suhrawardy Udyan in the city.

Prime Minister and AL President Sheikh Hasina inaugurated the council by hoisting the national flag and releasing pigeons and balloons at 10.30am. AL General Secretary and Road Transport and Bridges Minister Quader hoisted the party flag in the inaugural function while presidents of 78 organizational districts also raised the national flag and general secretaries hoisted the party flag at the function. Sheikh Selim said when AL General Secretary Shamsul Haque was imprisoned and he fell sick, Bangabandhu was made the acting general secretary and turned the party into a people's institution, adding that Bangabandhu resigned from the cabinet to organize the AL. Noting that Awami League is the largest political organization of the subcontinent, the AL leader said AL was formed through Bangabandhu's political philosophy, honesty and spirit of non-communalism. Highlighting Bangabandhu's stance against irregularities and unjust and his firmness for right steps, he said Dhaka University (DU) authority had expelled Bangabandhu for taking part in a movement expressing solidarity with the fourth class employees of the university.

Later, when Bangabandhu was asked to seek apology for withdrawing his expulsion, Selim said, he (Bangabandhu) refused the proposal with strong antipathy. Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman approached Ataur Rahman Khan and Abdus Salam for reviving the AL Awami League in 1964, but none of them agreed, the AL leader said. When he (Bangabandhu) went to Maulana Abdur Rashid Tarkabagish, he (Tarkabagish) agreed with Bangabandhu. Subsequently, AL was reorganized with Maulana Abdur Rashid Tarkabagish as president and Bangabandhu as secretary of the party.