

Hasina relinquishes her position as BCL leader

Stern action will be taken against troublemakers in educational institutions

Prime Minister and ruling Awami League president Sheikh Hasina relinquished her position as Bangladesh Chhatra League's supreme organizational leader, in the wake of series of clashes between rival groups of students in educational institutions, reports UNB.

She also ordered a crackdown on campus unrest, directing the law-enforcing

agencies to tackle with a strong hand the troublemakers in her party's student wing, or any other student organizations for that matter, who are unleashing violence in educational institutions.

The directives came from the presidium meeting of the party held at its Dhanmondi office on Saturday with the AL chief presiding.

"Chhatra League or any

student organizations involved in violence, terrorism and extortion will be dealt with a strong hand—and the directive will be executed forthwith, from Saturday," AL spokesman and LGRD Minister Syed Ashrafur Islam quoted Sheikh Hasina as telling her party high command at the meeting.

The spokesman told journalists at a press briefing after

the presidium meeting that Sheikh Hasina will no more hold the leadership of BCL and it will cease to be a front of the party following amendment to the party constitution.

"She (Hasina) proposed to step down from the leadership of BCL and it was accepted in the meeting. Even, she doesn't want to see her portrait hung in BCL's of-

fices," Syed Ashrafur said.

The premier took a tough stand as on-again, off-again campus violence continued in different high educational institutions, the latest bloody one at Dhaka Medical College, where a BCL leader was killed in a factional fight.

He said the AL would submit its amended constitution (See Back Page Col. 4)

Stern action

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tion to the Election Commission within the deadline in keeping with restrictions stipulated in the latest Representation of People Order (RPO).

The RPO was framed as per the political reforms brought about under the immediate-past emergency regime following the past political crisis over election issues.

A committee which has been working on the amendment (mean for party reform) has already been strengthened through co-optation of new members.

The meeting expressed its satisfaction over the just-held parliamentary by-elections in six constituencies.

Replying to a question Ashrafur said they would not keep any provision for front organizations but have associate organizations.

"We followed EC's instruction with the fullest respect as no MPs or ministers did go to polling centers, but other political parties did not obey the EC's instructions," said the AL spokesman.

He said they focused on the prices of essential commodities in the two-hour-long meeting.

"You know, prices of essentials have already been reduced, but we're not happy," Ashrafur said, adding that they discussed how the prices of essentials could be brought down further.

Quoting Sheikh Hasina, Ashrafur said she directed the law-enforcing agencies to utilize all tools of law to control the unruly activists of all academic organizations, especially BCL.

Ashrafur said the presidium body resented the BCL's factional clashes.

He said they considered the campus violence as "criminal activities".

Talking on the election ex-

penditure, he said they submitted a 27-page account on election expenditure while BNP and Jamaat submitted only one-page reports.

"The EC can make it public for countrymen if it wants," he said.

Replying to a question Ashrafur said the BCL is organizationally in weak position right now. "The committee was formed just before 1/11 and its General Secretary was arrested at that time, which ultimately made the organization weak," he said.