

Peoples' interest is our top priority: Tarique Rahman

DHAKA :: BNP Chairman Tarique Rahman on Saturday said interests of the people of Bangladesh will be the foremost priority for his party and the government.

“The interests of Bangladesh and its people come first to us. We will decide our foreign policy by keeping the interests of the country and its people intact,” he said.

The BNP Chairman made these remarks today while responding to a question from a foreign journalist during a press conference held at Hotel InterContinental in the capital.

Elaborating his party's foreign policy, BNP Standing Committee member Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury said, “BNP follows the principle of multilateralism. We do not have any country-centric policy. Our policy applies to all countries of the world based on mutual respect, mutual interest, non-interference, and strategic autonomy for Bangladesh.”

Regarding the judiciary, he emphasized that it is a matter for the judicial branch, adding, “Of course, we would like to see the judiciary separate from the executive and legislative.”

Responding to a question about whether the election was ‘easy’ and any ‘engineering’ was required to secure over 200 seats, Tarique Rahman said, “Convincing the people of the country is our ‘engineering.’ We have succeeded, Alhamdulillah.”

He added, “Convincing the people and ensuring a fair and beautiful environment was the answer to your first question. To achieve the goal of any good work, one must work hard; it will naturally be difficult.”

When asked about the future relations with India, Pakistan,

and China, the BNP Chairman referred back to his earlier statement and asked Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury to elaborate.

Khasru added, "I have already stated our foreign policy. Our policy will be formed by keeping the country's interests intact."

On the government's priority challenges, Tarique Rahman identified several key areas: "We have some challenges ahead, including mobilizing the economy, controlling the law and order situation, and ensuring the security of our people. As you know, the previous regime politicized all state institutions."

"Therefore, we will establish good governance. We see these as challenges that we need to tackle," he said.

Regarding plans for the youth, he said, "We have received the people's mandate. While the youth are certainly a priority, there are people from all walks of life and professions in society. We will address everyone. We have already published our party manifesto, which outlines what we will do for the youths, women, and persons of special needs."

On the issue of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and the potential return of Sheikh Hasina to the country, Tarique Rahman noted, "As you know, SAARC was formed at the initiative of Bangladesh. Naturally, we want to revitalize SAARC and will hold discussions on this matter."

Regarding China-Bangladesh relations, he said, "Definitely, we will try to protect the interests of the people of Bangladesh. We will build relationship with all countries while keeping our national interest at the forefront. I am sure mutual interest is the first priority."

In response to another question, he noted that Chinese partners are involved in various development activities in the country and expressed hope that the two nations would work

even more closely in the coming days.

When asked how the economy would be mobilized, he replied, "By bringing more businesses and creating more jobs."

On the application of laws to prevent corruption and maintain law and order, Tarique Rahman asserted, "The law is equal for everyone. If the law remains equal for all, we will try to ensure that the law takes its own course once we assume the responsibility."

Regarding the party's stance on the Awami League, he replied, "By ensuring the rule of law."

On plans to recover laundered money and wealth plundered during the previous regime, he advised, "If you look at our manifesto, you will find answers to these questions."

"I have mentioned a 'Democratic Economy' in the manifesto-meaning we want to initiate an economy where everyone can conduct business based on their ability and merit. We do not want to give special opportunities to any specific circle," he said.

Journalists from various international media including Al Jazeera, BBC, and ABC, as well as representatives from China, India, Pakistan, Japan, and Germany, attended the conference.

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir and members of the Standing Committee were present on the stage alongside Tarique Rahman.

At the beginning of the conference Tarique Rahman delivered a speech thanking the people of the country for their absolute mandate to BNP in the parliamentary elections.