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President's profile

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The country's 16th President A.Q.M. Badruddoza Chowdhury had been the founding secretary general of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and deputy prime minister of late president Ziaur Rahman's cabinet.

A well-known physician and professor at the Dhaka Medical College, Chowdhury had been in charge of the Ministry of Health and Population in Ziaur Rahman's cabinet.

Professor Chowdhury had been elected member of parliament from his constituency in Munshiganj five times and the

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President asked to quit

Resignation letter likely to be submitted today

STAR REPORT

President Badruddoza Chowdhury has been asked to step down immediately.

The BNP Parliamentary Party at a meeting last night asked the President to leave office for 'betraying' the party.

Accepting the fate, the president is likely to hand over his resignation letter to the Speaker sometime today after staying at the helm of the country's highest office for only 219 days.

This is for the first time a democratically elected president in the country has been forced out of office by an elected government.

None other than the President's son, Mahi B Chowdhury, was designated to tell the President that he has been asked to stand down.

"The President has made up his mind to step down," Mahi said yesterday following the party decision. "He will resign tomorrow (this) evening after completion of some formalities like meeting with the Bangabhaban staff and bidding them bye."

"The President has decided to resign on three considerations. First, as a respect for democracy, second, to honour the resolution of the party of which he was the founding secretary general and third, since the licence of the BNP is in the name of President Chowdhury."

Mahi, who is also a BNP lawmaker, responded to queries from reporters at the Bangabhaban entrance. He stepped out of the presidential motorcade that brought President Chowdhury to the presidential mansion at around 9:20pm. The President, accompanied by his wife Hasina Warda Chowdhury, had left Bangabhaban for his private residence at Baridhara around 5:00pm. On the way, he visited the KC Memorial Clinic which he owns.

The BNP Parliamentary Party decided to ask for his immediate ouster in a brief resolution at the end of a two-day hectic session with Prime Minister Khaleda Zia in the chair. After the deliberations that ended at 7:00pm, Chief Whip Khandaker Delwar Hussain read out the terse resolution at his Sangsad Bhaban chamber for the waiting newsmen.

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PHOTO: PID



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All smiles or is it?...President A.Q.M. Badruddoza Chowdhury waves to journalists as his wife looks on while driving to the Bangabhaban last night (left); and Prime Minister Khaleda Zia chairs the BNP Parliamentary Party meeting held earlier yesterday in the House, which unanimously decided that the president should go.

Sircar to be acting president

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speaker Jamiruddin Sircar will discharge the responsibility of the president after Prof A.Q.M. Badruddoza Chowdhury resigns this evening.

President Chowdhury has decided to resign today as the ruling BNP's parliamentary party in an 'unanimous resolution' asked him to quit office immediately.

Article 54 of the Constitution says, "If a vacancy occurs in the office of President or if the President is unable to discharge the function of his office on account of absence, illness or any other cause, the Speaker shall discharge those functions until a President is elected or until the President resumes the function of his office, as the case may be."

Article 123 (2) of the Constitution reads, "In case of a vacancy in the office of President occurring by reason of death, resignation or removal of the President, an election to fill the vacancy shall be held within the period of 90 days after the occurrence of the vacancy."

The Election Commission will arrange the election and members of parliament will elect the new president.

BNP sources said Speaker

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Badruddoza pays for 'betrayal', says BNP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The ruling BNP has requested President A.Q.M. Badruddoza Chowdhury to resign immediately as he has 'betrayed' with the party that has created him, said Khandakar Delwar Hossain, chief whip of the House.

"Creation defies creator and it cannot be accepted," he said while briefing reporters on the BNP resolution against the president at his parliament chamber last night.

Asked how the president betrayed, the chief whip said: "We, the BNP members, visit Shaheed president Ziaur Rahman's mazaar (gravesite) on his death anniversary. But, he (the president) did not go there this time... his conduct appeared to be a sudden exception in our eyes and the people's."

Delwar continued to say the president also did not mention in his official message on Zia's death anniversary that the late president proclaimed Bangladesh's independence.

"Prof. Badruddoza Chowdhury was the founding secretary general of the BNP. There is no reason for him not to visit the mazaar or not to call him the declarer of independence after becoming the president," he said.

All those who spoke on the issue at the two-day BNP Parliamentary Party (BNPPP) meeting found that Prof. Chowdhury had lost his confidence in the party, its ideology and from the very beginning.

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AL watches events

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Awami League is 'closely watching' the developments after the ruling BNP asked President A.Q.M. Badruddoza Chowdhury to resign.

A formal reaction of the main opposition party on the issue would, however, come at a meeting of the party presidium scheduled to be held at 10 am today.

Chief Whip of the Opposition Abdus Shahid questioned the logic of discussing resignation of the president at the ruling party's parliamentary party meeting. It might pose a 'big threat' to parliamentary democracy, he felt.

Asked by newsmen last night, Shahid said the office of the presi

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AL joins JS Sunday

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The main opposition Awami League has decided to join the eighth Jatiya Sangsad's session on Sunday, ending its boycott of the House from the very beginning.

The decision was taken at a crucial joint meeting of the party's Central Working Committee (ALCWC) and the AL Parliamentary Party (ALPP) in the city yesterday with party chief Sheikh Hasina in the chair.

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After the four-hour meeting, AL

presidium members led by Abdus Samad Azad briefed newsmen about its outcome.

"We have decided to join the parliament session. We will tell the people the date of our joining the session from a public rally on June 23," Samad Azad said.

The rally will be held at the city's Paltan Maidan marking the party's 54th founding anniversary.

However, lawmakers who

Classic clash on cards

AP

In a World Cup full of upstarts, the Brazil-England quarterfinal is a classic match up, featuring a whirlwind attack against the tournament's best defence.

"It will be like an early final," Brazilian midfielder Juninho said.

The other games are three-time winners Germany vs. United States, star-studded Spain vs. South Korea and newcomers Senegal vs. Turkey.

So, with so many surprises -- including stunning upsets that sent France, Argentina and Italy home -- who knows who might advance from those games?

Brazil-England, however, is a meeting of soccer superpowers and two former champions, with the

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Grameen Match Report

DHL Spec Report