

**The four-party alliance government is also guilty of giving the culture of politicisation a new dimension in its four years tenure. Starting from appointment of judges to the high court to the selection of 150 former JCD leaders as Upazila Elections Officers, the government has broken all records of politicisation.**



During the so-called 'Operation Clean Heart' over 40 people died in army custody. The government later promulgated an ordinance indemnifying the army.

**A** PART from maintaining law and order, the government has failed miserably in curbing corruption. In the 2001 election-eering, one of the decisive blows that the AL took came from a report made by Berlin-based Transparency International (TI). That year, in the TI's annual corruption index, Bangladesh was rated as the world's most corrupt nation. The AL government was indeed corrupt - if not the most corrupt among all it had competed with - and BNP spin-doctors successfully made a big issue of it in the run up to the elections.

In the following year, the country retained the infamous title, and the BNP blamed it on the caretaker government. But the government was declared the same in the next year too, and now the BNP started to criticise the Transparency International itself for lodging a smear cam

paign against the country's image.

But the fact of the matter is, while general people are getting poorer by day, a new class of lumpen bourgeoisie is flourishing, people who are the ultimate beneficiaries of a culture of unfettered corruption.

Though fingers are pointed to Hawa Bhaban and Khaleda Zia's son Tarique Zia's alleged back-room dealings, the government has not taken any initiative to prove the critics wrong. Khaleda routinely denies allegations of corruption against her government as a "conspiracy to tarnish the country's image". But what she does not elucidate how within a short period of time her followers have amassed such a huge fortune. Madam - as she is fondly called by the faithful - and her four-year-old coalition has left so many embarrassing questions unanswered.

**N**O where is the government's failure more glaring than it is in the power sector. It might sound implausible but the BNP-led coalition government has, in the last four years, set up only one power plant in Tongi that has the capacity to produce 100 megawatt. It too was completed early this month. It has signed a deal for setting up a second power plant, at Fenchuganj, but it is scheduled to be completed in 2008.

What makes the BNP-led government's failure in the power sector almost an offence is the fact that power is directly related to production, not only industrial but also agricultural production, especially for irrigation purposes. Only 30 to 35 percent of the total population have access to power and due to deficit between demand and supply which stood somewhere at around 200 to 250 mw four years back and has now climbed up to 500 mw. As of August this year, BNP did not add a single mw power to what AL left in 2001. Thus the 35 percent of the population have to suffer frequent



BNP has been steadfast in persecuting the opposition keeping up the practice of their predecessors.