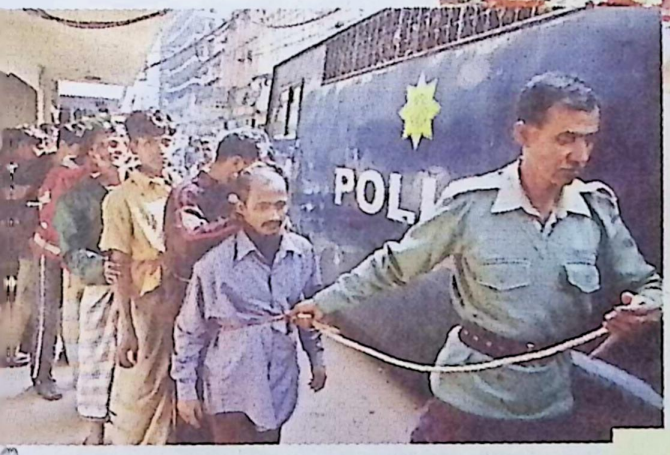
Again, the League came late to the game. Not only had the public mood soured, but some of their own supporters turned their backs. The protests were public and damaging. Most importantly, when time was against them in a race to attain a condition that would allow a semblance of impartiality in the elections, AL had lost crucial negotiation time.





The AL's blockade programme has brought about some concessions but has also brought about untold miseries on the public.

These fissures opened into wide-open cracks because of two ill-advised moves. First, a particular faction within the AL pushed the idea that the creation of a grand electoral alliance would outweigh the BNP-Jamaat coalition's legacy in the election process. But when the Bangladesh Khelafat Majlish (BKM) were courted for an electoral alliance, the League leadership didn't and perhaps couldn't quell the anger welling up within its ranks. The clandestine nature of the deal only exacerbated the tenacity of internal protests. Some of the presidium committee members and most other senior leaders were kept in the dark about the deal. AL's supporters, enemies and the indifferent were witness to the vanguard of Bangladeshi secularism fall victim to a poorly-calculated power politics move.

Again, the League came late to the game. Not only had the public mood soured, but some of their own supporters turned their backs. The protests were public and damaging. Most importantly, when time was against them in a race to attain a condition that would allow a semblance of impartiality in the elections, AL had lost crucial negotiation time. All that stood in AL's way was the seemingly endless layers of, in Sheikh Hasina's terms, Iajuddin's onion.

Hasina on December 28 renamed Iajuddin as "Peyajuddin," likening him to an onion that reveals a new 'conspiracy' with every layer that is peeled. The subsequent January 3 announcement to boycott the January 22 elections, has at least made clear that Awami League will not go to the elections unless all of the onion's layers are peeled. The League's job has been made a little easier by the BNP's reluctance to move. If the Chief Adviser's words are to be considered, the caretaker government will also maintain its position unless divinity intervenes.



Hasina likened President Iiajuddin to an onion and called him 'Peyajuddin'.

At least we know the cards are on the table. We finally know who stands where and well, how they will keep on standing there like statues under the wrath of crows over-fed on Dhaka's endless supply of political garbage. It's up to the The Awami League to move. ■