

'INDIFFERENCE' TO BNP CHIEF'S 'PLIGHT'

Top leaders' allegiance to party questioned

RAKIB HASNET SUMAN

Indifference of the senior BNP leaders to the 'plight' of the party chief Khaleda Zia and her family has raised questions among the rank and file about their allegiance to the party.

A rift within BNP seems to be imminent with most of the young leaders accusing the senior group of hatching anti-party plots, said sources.

Most of those leaders who were ministers in the last five years are staying mum to save their skin, added the sources.

Things are more confusing for the party workers and the grass-

roots level leaders as they remain in the dark with no direction from the high command in last two months.

Meanwhile, some of the senior leaders believe that misdeeds of the junior leaders obedient to Tarique Rahman are solely responsible for the mess now BNP is in. Although the writing was on the wall the then prime minister Khaleda Zia did not bother to take any action against them.

The young leaders began to voice their resentment towards the senior leaders especially after the Awami League (AL) had issued a statement to protest the extortion case filed against its President Sheikh Hasina.

"The Awami League leaders have issued a strong statement to protest the case filed against Hasina though the situation was not in favour of them either.

"Unfortunately, our leaders did not say or do anything to condemn the arrest of Tarique or oppose the government's attitude towards the BNP chairperson," a former lawmaker, who was a student leader in the 90s, told The Daily Star.

Most of the leaders had been avoiding Khaleda Zia well before the arrest of party's Senior Joint Secretary General Tarique Rahman. Fearful of harassment, many of them have not contacted

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4 outlaws, JMB militant arrested in Bagmara

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Police arrested four activists of outlawed Sarbahara Party and a JMB militant in separate raids in Bagmara upazila early yesterday.

The detained outlaws are Rashidul Islam, 30, Samjan Ali, 25, Anisur Rahman, 27, and Shahin, 31.

Rashidul was arrested at Dulalipara village, while Samjan, Anis and Shahin were arrested at Konapara village.

Police said the outlaws were wanted in a number of murder and other criminal cases.

The JMB activist was identified as Rahidul, 33, son of Moqbul Hossain of Bhabaniganj Bazar.

Police said Rahidul was involved in criminal activities in Bagmara upazila under the leadership of JMJB kingpin Siddiqui Islam alias Bangla Bhai, who was executed in Jhalakathi judges' murder case on March 29.

FAVOURITISM SCANDAL WB president faces battle to survive

AFP, Washington

World Bank president Paul Wolfowitz faced a fight for his political life yesterday after the development lender's directors demolished his defence in a favouritism scandal surrounding his girlfriend.

As calls mounted for the former US deputy defence secretary to resign, the 24 executive directors issued a statement that left Wolfowitz squarely isolated heading into a weekend of high-level talks among global financial leaders.

After a day-long emergency meeting that stretched late into the night, the board detailed the findings of its investigation into the row over Wolfowitz's Libyan-born partner, Shaha Riza.

More than 100 pages of documents released with the statement revealed that on Wolfowitz's personal direction, Riza was given raises that took her annual pay package to nearly 200,000 dollars when she was reassigned from the World Bank to the US State Department.

Riza remained on the World



Paul Wolfowitz

Bank payroll despite her move, which was to forestall any conflicts of interest after Wolfowitz took charge of the bank in June 2005.

"The executive directors will move expeditiously to reach a conclusion on possible actions to take," the board's statement said.

"In their consideration of the matter, the executive directors will

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Two relatives of slain Jhalakathi PP arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Police yesterday arrested two relatives of Jhalakathi Public Prosecutor (PP) Hyder Hossain, killed by unknown assailants Wednesday night, on suspicion of having links with the killing.

Police sources said the arrests were made suspecting their involvement with the killing as Hyder had a dispute with the arrestees over the ownership of a piece of land.

Nazrul Islam, 44, and Mantu Miah, 52, paternal cousins of the PP, was arrested at their village home in Kandargati of Binyokati in Jhalakathi around 6:00am. The number of arrests made following the killing is now four as two people were arrested on Thursday and a bomb was recovered. They are being interrogated.

Mustafa Kamal, investigation officer (IO) of the murder case, said Tarek Ibne Hyder, son of the PP, filed a case with Jhalakathi Police Station Thursday night without naming any suspects.

The arrestees, however, denied having any links with the killing. They said they had filed a case

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David's brother held in N'ganj

A CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested a listed criminal in the district town on Thursday night.

A team of Rab-11 arrested Mahbubullah Tapan, 38, at Missionpara intersection at 10:30pm.

His elder brother Mominullah David, a leader of town Jubo Dal, was killed in an encounter with Rab at Khilgaon in the capital in October, 2004.

Rab sources said Tapan was involved in land grabbing, extortion and other criminal activities in the town during the rule of immediate past BNP-led alliance government.

He is an accused in four criminal cases filed with Narayanganj Police Station.

Tapan is being quizzed at Rab camp in old prison in the town.



Dancers perform in presence of a huge audience at Bangla year-end celebration in DC Hill area of Chittagong city yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

COMPUTERISED LAND MANAGEMENT Project gathers dust, funds for phase II gobbled up

PINAKI ROY

The computerised land management system (CLMS), a project undertaken to reduce land disputes and to increase revenues, lies idle due to lack of initiatives from the land ministry.

Funds allocated for the second phase of the project have already been used up while the work has not even started in many areas.

Under the CLMS, information on every land, its sales, transfers, current and former ownerships, categories of use, etc are supposed to be compiled and stored in a readily accessible database structured in line with the revised land settlement record of 1969 to 1983.

Once in operation, the system is supposed to effect a drastic reduction in the number of land disputes, as fake documents would be too hard to come by and would be of no use then.

Following completion of the first phase in Demra circle, the land ministry removed the very officials who had been instrumental in making the pilot project successful. It then allocated funds for the next phase to be implemented in Kotwali, Dhanmondi, Mirpur and Tejgaon circles in the capital.

Twenty percent of the project work in Mirpur and 50 percent in Kotwali have been done but nothing has been done in Dhanmondi and Tejgaon circles, whereas the money allocated has already been gobbled up, said sources involved with the project.

"I have just taken up the charge, so I can't say exactly what happened during that time," the assistant commissioner (AC-Land) of Demra and Tejgaon circles told The Daily Star.

The land ministry sources said the government allocated Tk 97 lakh for the project in Demra in November 2004. The Centre for Environmental and Geographic Information Services (CEGIS) was awarded the job to develop a software system to keep land records, which they did successfully.

The government then allocated

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Rejoinder

Public Service Commission (PSC) Director Robiul Islam in a rejoinder to a report headlined "Corrupt PSC officials get promotion" published in The Daily Star on April 11 said some portions of the report are "totally baseless" and have damaged his reputation and social status by casting aspersions on his integrity.

Robiul claimed that during his 25 years' career of public service he was never punished on the charge of abuse of power. He said he is the most senior officer of the PSC and

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Prayer Timing		
April 14		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-35	5-10
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-45	5-00
Maghrib	6-24	6-28
Esha	7-45	8-15
Source: Islamic Foundation		



PHOTO: STAR

Five vehicles seized from the house of Shyampur union Chairman Lutfar Rahman, who is also brother-in-law of former lawmaker Salahuddin Ahmed, have been kept at Shyampur Police Station. The photo was taken yesterday.

ICC WORLD CUP 07 Australia book Ireland for 91

AFP, Bridgetown

Australia fast bowlers Glenn McGrath and Shaun Tait proved too hot to handle for debutants Ireland, who crashed to 91 all out in their World Cup Super Eights match here yesterday.

The formidable duo of McGrath (3-17) and Tait (3-39) reduced the match to a no-contest in less than five overs when they shared four wickets to send the Cup debutants reeling to 12-4 on a pitch having pace, bounce and movement.

Awin will give defending champions Australia, who are on eight points, a place in the last-four.

Ireland, who gave a good account of themselves in the previous Super Eights games, were overawed by the occasion for the first time as they looked extremely

vulnerable against quality pace after being put in to bat.

John Mooney (23), Kevin O'Brien (16) and skipper Trent Johnston (17) were the only batsmen to reach double-figures in a brittle batting display lasting just 30 overs.

The carnage began in the opening over when veteran McGrath brought one in sharply to rattle the stumps of Australian-born Jeremy Bray. The next four overs only added to Ireland's batting woes.

Tait, improving with every match, bowled at a lively pace on a helpful track and was on a hat-trick in only his second over when he trapped opener William Porterfield leg-before and bowled Niall O'Brien.

Wickets continued to tumble as

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Pak protesters defy crackdown, burn Musharraf's effigies

AFP, Islamabad

Defying a security crackdown, more than 3,000 lawyers and opposition activists torched an effigy of President Pervez Musharraf in protests yesterday against his removal of Pakistan's top judge. Flag-waving demonstrators massed outside the Supreme Court in Islamabad, where Chief Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry attended a fourth hearing into misconduct charges lodged by the president.

Military ruler Musharraf sacked

the independent-minded Chaudhry on March 9, sparking nationwide demonstrations and a tense political crisis now spilling into its second month.

"Go Musharraf, go" the protesters chanted, and "Musharraf is America's pet dog," as hundreds of paramilitary troops and baton-wielding riot police kept them away from the imposing court building.

Some opposition party demonstrators set fire to a dummy and a poster of the president and beat them frantically with their shoes in a sign of disrespect, an AFP photog-

rapher said. Others torched piles of old tyres.

"Our message for Musharraf is that people want real democracy and not the mock arrangement that we have now," cricket hero-turned-politician Imran Khan told AFP at the rally.

Lawyers wearing smart black suits and crisp white shirts held black flags and mobbed Chaudhry's car as he arrived at court and again as he left. A couple of lawyers climbed on top of the vehicle.

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