

Hasina's return

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further hatred and confusion among the people. All this might disrupt the country's law and order and threaten the national security and economy, it adds.

The measures however are temporary.

The foreign, civil aviation and tourism ministries and the inspector general of police have been asked to take necessary steps in line with the government's decision.

The AL spanning 59 long years mostly on the streets seems to be in a quandary with its senior leaders completely clueless about the development.

"The government has just banned her from entering the country," Abdul Jalil, AL general secretary, told The Daily Star last night. "I don't have any comment at this stage."

Some leaders think the fate of Hasina and Khaleda was a foregone conclusion from the moment the new caretaker government took over. In fact, the so-called 'Minus Two' formula -- politics without the two begums -- so much speculated about for the last few months is now coming into play.

The speculation was buttressed by Law Adviser Mainul Hossain's recent comment that the government is not interested in any election keeping the current political leadership in place.

"We want good new leadership to emerge instead of the old ones," he said after a meeting with the chief election commissioner at the Election Commission Secretariat on April 4.

Speaking in return for anonymity, a senior BNP leader said, "If they [the two leaders] had committed any crime, they should have been tried here and sentenced. But what we are witnessing now is a completely new approach to democracy."

However, most of the leaders stayed mum on the popular talks that politics with these two leaders in place has no future.

The BNP with a comfortable history of over 25 years, mostly in power with the aid of political remnants of other parties including the AL, is today panting in its sudden twilight existence. It too is short on answers to what the future holds for the party.

Khaleda has already packed her bags and is set to fly to Saudi Arabia apparently to 'perform' Umrah. Then she will stay back there without any fuss, according to an arrangement learnt to have been made by the powers that be.

She has already secured the release of her younger son, Arifat Rahman Coco, who is widely alleged to have been involved in massive corruption, keeping a very low profile.

Khaleda's daughter-in-law went to the Dhaka Central Jail yesterday to bid farewell to her husband, Tarique Rahman, who in the last five years had become the icon of graft in Bangladesh.

Khaleda wanted to take Tarique along with her to exile, but so far the only concession that she seems to have gained is a six-month stay on the proceedings of the extortion case against him.

Meanwhile, sources said party colleagues informed Hasina of the 'ban on her return' Tuesday night, much before the press note was

BNP not losing

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current predicament, but they believe it has 'strong support among the people'.

Many of the party leaders and activists however fear that some sections might try to split the party in absence of Khaleda Zia.

Sources said the leaders and activists have not been getting any direction from the party high command since the arrest of their Joint Secretary General Tarique Rahman, creating a void that might give rise to some more problems for the party in the coming days.

According to the party leaders and activists, in absence of Khaleda Zia only Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, the party secretary general, might be able to save it from a possible split.

Although they also claim to know that following the path taken by previous military rulers the current military backed regime will also try to implant its own man in BNP and it even might coerce the party into becoming 'loyal'.

Sources said senior BNP leaders, who are seemingly lucky enough to stay outside of jails still, like standing committee members Saifur Rahman, Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, Chowdhury Tanveer Ahmed Siddique, and Dr RA Gon, who are very much known for their commitment to the party, are not likely to abandon it since they had not left it even during the heavy handed regime of former military dictator HM Ershad.

The leaders hope that the party will be able to weather the present crisis with the help of the people'.

"BNP is going through a bad time so it is difficult to say now what the future holds for the party but the gathering cloud will clear up when the government will withdraw the ban on indoor politics," a former BNP lawmaker told The Daily Star yesterday.

He said, "BNP is experienced in

SL wipe out

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while out-of-form Kumar Sangakkara fell to a brilliant catch by Kenneth Carroll off Dave Langford-Smith for 5.

Ireland's score of 77 was the sixth lowest in World Cup history.

Maharoof's haul of four for 25 in 10 overs included a sensational start that saw the pace bowler take three wickets in four balls in his first over.

Off-spinner Muralidaran followed up with two wickets in three balls in his first over on his way to a miserly return of four for 19 in five overs.

Ireland's total - which featured five noughts - was the lowest at this World Cup, edging Bermuda's 78 against Sri Lanka.

The 1996 champions recalled bowlers Chaminda Vaas and Muralidaran, controversially rested for the seven-wicket defeat by world champions Australia here Monday when they were already through to the semifinals, but it was Maharoof who sparked the slide.

The first change was pulled and driven through extra-cover for fours off his first two balls by Jeremy Bray, one of an all left-handed top five.

However, he then switched to round the wicket, and with his next delivery had Bray pushing a catch to Russel Arnold at short extra-cover leaving Ireland 28 for one in the eighth over.

Two balls later Andre Botha sparred outside off-stump and was caught behind by wicketkeeper Kumar Sangakkara for nought.

Next ball Eoin Morgan was brilliantly caught by a diving Sangakkara for a golden duck and Ireland were 28 for three with Maharoof on a hattrick at the start of his second over which Niall O'Brien survived.

But Maharoof had a fourth wicket when opener William Porterfield (17) skied to Sanath Jayasuriya at mid-on.

Murali then struck with his second ball when Niall O'Brien was caught behind and two balls later postman Kenny Carroll, on his World Cup debut and the only change to the team that beat Bangladesh by 74 runs in Barbados on Sunday, missed a full toss and was bowled round his legs for nought.

In absence of Khaleda Zia, Tarique's wife and their only daughter will stay with his mother-in-law Iqbalmandi Banu in her Dhanmondi residence in the capital, the sources added.

Khaleda Zia's cantonment residence on Shahid Moinul Hossain Road, which was donated to her by the erstwhile government following the assassination of late president Ziaur Rahman in 1981, will be put under a caretaker to be appointed by the Cantonment Board until the current government decides on its next course of action.

Meanwhile, Dr Zobaida Rahman and her mother yesterday met Tarique at Dhaka Central Jail, which the jail authorities termed as a routine monthly visit.

The sources said the BNP chief and her family members, who are leaving with her, are done with their preparations for departing the country.

Anti-graft

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there should have been more coordination and understanding, he said.

The government in early February formed 40 task forces in Dhaka alone under the coordination committee to probe allegations of graft. The task forces comprise both civil and military officials.

"We are dealing with high profile people, many of whom were involved in corporate corruption.

To tell you the truth, none of our departments has any experience of (probing) corporate corruption," the general pointed out.

"Today's (Wednesday) meeting discussed these matters."

Explaining the situation, Masud said, "For example, National Board of Revenue (NBR) has not perhaps filed any case against a tax evader. This kind of lacking is there for all of us."

At yesterday's meeting, he also explained the method of work of the taskforces. "We discussed how to produce visible actions by overcoming our problems."

Asked why the authorities had arrested former prime minister Khaleda Zia's younger son Arifat Rahman and then released him after one day, Masud said, "Communications adviser has already clarified that he was asked to answer some questions. He was sent back after interrogation."

In reply to a question if this (Arifat's release) means there is no allegation against Khaleda Zia so why they are creating pressure on her to leave the country?" a mid-level BNP leader asked.

He said the arrest of Tarique Rahman did not anger the people, as there were a lot of allegations against him but everybody should understand that Khaleda established herself as a political leader through a long struggle for democracy.

BNP leaders and activists are now comparing the present political climate of the country with that of the regime of former military dictator HM Ershad, since he had also usurped power from the then BNP government in the name of creating a corruption free country, who himself was later prosecuted and sentenced to jail for corruption.

'Used' machinery

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According to the sources, the importer opened an LC of \$9.15 lakh (equivalent to Tk 6.61 crore) with Southeast Bank, Dilkusha branch, for the capital machinery.

Due to a reported dispute between the bank and the importer over the declaration, the machinery of a Singapore brand had been lying undelivered for several weeks, sources said.

Zafrullah, Ashim

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He said he and his family members got scared the way the law enforcers were picking up his father. "At first we thought that he was being kidnapped, but later police confirmed that he had been arrested," Omar added.

The official confirmation about the arrests was not immediately available.

Meanwhile, BNP leader advocate Toymur Alam Khondoker was placed on a two-day remand after his arrest yesterday.

A team of joint forces arrested him from his Gulshan residence in a predawn raid.

In the afternoon, he was handed over to Paltan police who produced him before the court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate (CMM), Dhaka with a prayer for a seven-day remand in connection with a case filed by the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC).

In the case filed with Paltan Police Station, ACC Inspector Shafiqe Ullah mentioned that being a close aide of detained former communications minister Nazmul Huda, Toymur appointed 53 incompetent people in the BRTC through corruption.

Under a tight security, Paltan police produced a handcuffed Toymur before the CMM's court at 5:40pm where the defence lawyers submitted a petition for cancellation of the remand prayer.

In the forwarding report placed before the court, Officer-in-Charge of Paltan Police Station, who is also the investigation officer (IO) of the case, mentioned that Toymur appointed incompetent people at BRTC illegally which is considered to be a corruption.

So, he needs to be remanded to find out vital clues regarding his corruption, the IO said.

The defence lawyers submitted a petition for cancellation of the remand prayer saying that the case was filed against Toymur as part of a

conspiracy to harass him.

They said the process of appointing the candidates to different posts of BRTC was transparent.

Toymur told the court that the charges brought against him were false, fabricated and concocted. He also said the candidates were selected by different tests following the instruction from the concerned ministry.

After hearing both the sides, Metropolitan Magistrate Mamun AL Rashid rejected the defence petition for cancellation of the remand prayer and placed Toymur on a two-day remand.

UNDP

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asked the offices of district election officers to inform the upazila election officers about the test, sources said.

The upazila election officers, who joined the job in 2005, have also been given a syllabus for the examination.

Barapukuria

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Company Ltd (BCMCL) was unable to supply sufficient coal to the power plant.

The BCMCL now extracts a maximum of 1,000 to 1,200 tonnes coal a day, which is half the daily requirement of the Barapukuria power plant, according to sources at BCMCL.

Romendra Nath Ghosh, chief engineer at the power plant, told The Daily Star yesterday that the government had tendered tenders in March for importing coal on an urgent basis to cope with the growing demand of power during the Boro cultivation season.

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conspiracy to harass him.

They also have an agonising memory of a ten-wicket thrashing in their last meeting in the ICC Champions Trophy in India against the West Indies, winners of the first two World Cups in 1975 and 1979.

But Dav Whatmore's boys have already shown in the tournament that they can turn the table on any team and bounce back from disasters. One more sparkling show would help them avoid the last place in the Super Eights.

So, everybody is pinning hopes on another fightback by the Tigers who lost to England and Ireland in their last two encounters on the back of a splendid success against the Proteas that had silenced the critics who were calling Bangladesh's win over India a 'fluke'.

Consistency in batting would be the key to success not only in their match against the Caribbeans but also would boost their morale ahead of next month's home series against India.

On the other hand, West Indies, winners of the ICC Champions Trophy in 2004 and runners-up in last year's edition, won all three preliminary round matches to raise hopes of a successful campaign but failed to win a single match in the second round. Having lost to Australia, New Zealand, Sri Lanka and South Africa, the home side will look to save their blushes against Bangladesh and England in their last games.

Press note

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further hatred and confusion among the people. This might deteriorate the country's law and order, disturb the prevailing stability and threaten public safety and economy. Also to be noted, Sheikh Hasina herself is concerned about her security and has pleaded with the government through her party for special security arrangements. For the above-mentioned reasons, the government has decided to take some cautionary steps regarding her return. However, those measures are temporary.

Immigration at air and land ports, different airlines and the other authorities concerned have been informed to that end. The foreign, civil aviation and tourism ministries, civil aviation authority and the inspector general of police too have been requested to take necessary steps.

The army-led joint forces arrested Moudud from his Gulshan residence on April 13 and he was sued under Section 25 (B) of the Special Powers Act, 1974 for bringing the foreign liquor, evading government tax.

On March 25, the National Board of Revenue directed banks to freeze the accounts of Moudud Ahmed and his wife.

Huda's Arms Case

Another Dhaka court yesterday adjourned the proceedings of the arms case against Nazmul Huda till April 26 following a time petition by the defence lawyers.

Judge Mohammad Aman Ullah of the Fourth Additional

\$250m ADB aid

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and replacement of the existing lines with spaghetti lines.

ADB is assisting the government in piloting the proposed DWSP to provide round-the-clock safe, reliable, and efficient water supply.

Water losses have come down to 80 from 487 cubic metres a day in the project area. As a result, water consumption reduced to 471 cubic metres a day for 176 connections from 913 cubic metres per day for 145 connections during the same period.

The water delivery pressure has also increased alongside expansion of the distribution network while the spaghetti connections reduced and average hours of water supply increased to 24 hours in the project area, according to an evaluation.

Over 90 percent of the un-served households in Manikganj showed their willingness to pay for a household connection and the existing customers are willing to pay more for the 24-hour water supply, said a socio-economic survey carried out in 2006.

Under the project, around 400 plumbers have been trained out of the targeted 700 of the entire

DWASA area so that they can properly maintain the transmission and distribution network, and extend new pipelines, if necessary.

"While the construction management requires drastic improvement, skilled plumbers, working tools and constant professional supervision are badly needed to improve services and maintain the water supply system," Huda said.

She said the pilot project, aimed at developing understanding of critical issues and identifying best practices, might be useful in designing and implementing the entire project expected to begin next year.

The proposed DWSP is expected to ensure access to piped water for over 1 million people in Dhaka.

ADB is coordinating the World Bank, UK's Department for International Development (DFID), Danish International Development Agency, Japan Bank for International Cooperation and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for the overall support programme for water and sanitation sector in Bangladesh.

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