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Final Khaleda family reunion before exile likely today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The family of former prime minister Khaleda Zia are likely to have their final reunion with Tarique Rahman today before flying out of the country.

Tarique's daughter Zaima, a student of standard IV at International School of Dhaka, yesterday went to school to say good-bye to her friends and teachers, a close relative of the family told The Daily Star yesterday.

But Tarique's wife Dr Zobaidah Rahman is unwilling to leave behind her husband in the country, he said, adding, "She has been very upset and wants to stay in the country as she is not involved in any crime or politics."

Khaleda, Zobaidah, Zaima and SEE PAGE 19 COL 3

HC asks govt if Khaleda confined

Expresses concern over the issue after petition

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

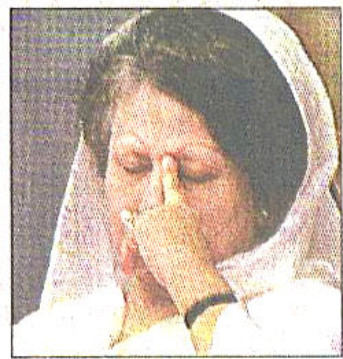
The High Court (HC) yesterday ordered the government to inform it about the present state of former prime minister and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, including whether she is confined or not.

The order followed a petition filed by BNP leader Khondker Babul Chowdhury challenging the reported confinement of Khaleda to her house, and seeking a directive from the court for not sending her abroad.

The HC also expressed its concern over the issue and asked the state side counsel to convey "our anxiety to the authorities concerned."

Hearing of the case was adjourned till Sunday.

When the petition about 'illegal confinement' of Khaleda was submitted, Additional Attorney



General Salauddin Ahmed, who stood for the state, told the court that he would inform it about the present state of the former premier in writing on Sunday.

Salauddin also said so far as he knows no measures have been taken for confinement or house arrest of Khaleda. "She is free, rather, we would have been surprised to see that she did not visit her son in prison."

Babul, a member of the BNP national executive committee, said in his petition that after prohibiting domestic politics on March 8, the present government started restricting Khaleda's movement outside her house, and asked her SEE PAGE 19 COL 5

Kazi Zafarullah, Ashim Ukil sent on one-month detention

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League (AL) presidium member and former lawmaker Kazi Zafarullah and AL deputy publicity secretary Ashim Kumar Ukil were sent to jail yesterday with government proposals for one-month detention.

Joint forces detained Zafarullah in front of his Gulshan-2 residence while Ashim was detained in Dhanmondi area Wednesday.

They were produced before the Court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Dhaka around 3:00pm amid tight security measures yesterday.

In the forwarding report placed before the court, Gulshan police accused Zafarullah of having links with a conspiracy to destabilise law and order in the country. The SEE PAGE 19 COL 6



Bangladesh paceman Syed Rasel (L) successfully appeals for an lbw decision against West Indies opener Chris Gayle (not in picture) during the World Cup Super Eight match at the Kensington Oval in Bridgetown yesterday.



Awami League President Sheikh Hasina and her son Sajeeb Wajed Joy at Dulles Airport in Washington DC. Hasina left the United States for London yesterday morning Bangladesh time.

EC proposes stringent rules for poll campaign

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission (EC) yesterday unveiled a set of proposals for introducing stringent provisions in the parliamentary election code of conduct for the political parties and candidates.

The proposals were for strict regulations on holding rallies and processions, sticking posters, graffiti, banners, festoons, caps, construction of archways, gates, illuminating structures and streets and the use of helicopters for election campaigns.

"Prior permission would have to be taken from proper authorities informing the specific time, date and places for holding any procession or meeting for any contesting political party and candidate during the pre-polls period," said the SEE PAGE 19 COL 4

draft proposals.

According to the draft proposals, the pre-polls period means the time from dissolution of a parliament to the completion of polls and the violation of code of conduct is an offence which is punishable with imprisonment, fine and cancellation of candidatures.

The eighth parliament was dissolved in October last year and polls are to be held by the end of 2008. All sorts of political activities have been banned since the declaration of the state of emergency on January 11.

Once the proposals are made into laws, no political parties would be allowed to bring out processions or hold rallies unless they have prior permission from the authorities.

Tigers fall apart

STAR SPORT MONITOR

Bangladesh were set to sign off from their best-ever World Cup campaign on a sour note when the Tigers were reeling on 48-5 in 20 overs chasing a challenging West Indies total of 230 in their final Super Eight match at Kensington Oval in Bridgetown, Barbados yesterday.

The Tigers, who floored India on their way to a dream passage into the second round and stunned the world by defeating top-ranked South Africa, never looked quite up to the task of negotiating the discomforting bounce that the famous venue was offering to the seam bowlers.

Bangladesh lost their way after young left-handed opener Tamim Iqbal was run out in a terrible mix-up with Javed Omar, recalled in the playing eleven in place of out-of-sort Shahriar Nafees.

Wickets fell more frequently than runs on the board with Aftab Ahmed (6), Shakib Al Hasan (0) and Mohammad Ashraful (2) and Javed joining the long procession.

Skipper Habibul Bashar, who had a miserable World Cup with the willow, was batting on 7 along with wicketkeeper Mushfiqur Rahim, 1.

Tamim was run out for seven with the total on 13 in the seventh over with Aftab Ahmed following quickly, caught behind by Denesh Ramdin for six off Corey Coleyemore, for six to make the score 21-2. Shakib tried to cut off his chest, but could only manage to fend it off to Ramdin.

Ashraful mistimed an attempted pull and was caught at square leg.

Earlier, West Indies vice-captain Ramnaresh Sarwan hit an attractive unbeaten 91 as the hosts recovered from a precarious start to post a fair total.

The 26-year-old added 81 for the fourth wicket with Shivnarine Chandepaul (50) and a quickfire 60 for the fifth with skipper Brian Lara to help the West Indies post the challenging total.

Sarwan hit five boundaries and two towering sixes during his 90-ball knock that lifted the hosts' chances of winning their first match in the second round.

Sarwan, who is tipped to take over from Lara as captain, capitalised on some sloppy fielding as he and the skipper added 84 runs in the final 10 overs.

Lara, who was playing his penultimate match after announcing he would retire from one-day cricket after the World Cup, hit a robust 27-ball 33 with two sixes and a four before he was caught off Abdur Razzak in the 47th over.

But it was the Tigers who had the upper hand from the outset until SEE PAGE 19 COL 7

Hasina flies in UK amid govt bar on home return

HASAN JAHD TUSHER

Awami League (AL) President Sheikh Hasina yesterday reached London with a hope to return home on April 23.

She will take a British Airways (BA) flight to Dhaka from Heathrow on April 22. The airliner is scheduled to take off at 9:30pm Bangladesh time and land at 5:45am on April 23, said sources in the UK.

If the carrier refuses to fly her, the former prime minister will seek alternative arrangements, added the sources.

From a personal visit to the

United States, she arrived in London at 3:30pm. Earlier in Washington, her son Sajeeb Wajed Joy and AL leaders and workers saw her off at Dulles International Airport at 7:55am Bangladesh time.

The government Wednesday slapped a ban on Hasina's coming home for now, saying her return might disrupt the country's law and order and put the national security and economy in grave peril.

In a press note, it said it has decided to take special cautionary steps regarding her return.

The military-backed administration blamed Hasina for the

violent street agitation leading to declaration of the state of emergency.

Besides, it alleged that she has made inflammatory statements against it and the law enforcement agencies at several meetings and in national and international media.

The government fears that if allowed to enter, she might attempt to preach hatred among the public and destabilise the country.

Issued by the home ministry, the press note said the AL chief herself has been concerned about her security and pleaded for special security measures and that was one SEE PAGE 19 COL 1

Govt to act if Hasina returns Says Adviser Matin

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government would take steps if Awami League (AL) chief Sheikh Hasina returns home, Communications Adviser M A Matin said yesterday.

Asked whether Hasina, now in UK on her way back home, would be arrested after arrival, he said, "the government would think about what steps would be taken against her." Matin, however, declined to elaborate.

The communications adviser also said that he had no knowledge of the AL chief's journey back to the country.

He was talking to the journalists SEE PAGE 19 COL 3

WILD GAS LEAKAGE

Situation improves a little at Titas gas field

PORIMOL PALMA, back from B'Baria

The threat of a catastrophic blow-out at Titas Gas Field in Brahmanbaria has finally been subdued as the authorities managed to reduce the amount of uncontrolled gas discharge from 15-18 million cubic feet a day (mmcf) to 8-9 mmcf.

More than half of the uncontrolled discharged gas is now being diverted to the processing plant while the rest is being burned

through a pipe outlet, officials concerned told a group of journalists during their visit to the Titas Gas Field yesterday.

"A blowout prevention expert, Bob Grace of GSM, is coming from Canada tomorrow [today]. Once he arrives, he will assess all our survey reports and then we will jointly decide the next course of action to bring the total gas leakage under control," said Muqtadir Ali, director (PSC) of Petrobangla.

Responding to a question, the

managing director of Bangladesh Gas Field Company Ltd (BGFCL) claimed that the gas field suffered a loss of Tk 73 lakh during 54 hours from April 16 to April 18. He could not however say how long the gas leakage will continue.

"We will try to bring the leakage under control as soon as possible with the assistance of the foreign consultant," he said.

Sporadic gas leakage from various points of the ground in SEE PAGE 19 COL 1

Mamun confesses to extortion of Tk 53 lakh

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Giasuddin Al Mamun, detained close friend and business partner of BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Tarique Rahman, yesterday confessed to his involvement in an extortion of Tk 53 lakh.

Shahbagh police also brought Mamun on a three-day remand yesterday in connection with a case filed for extorting Tk 10.31 crore from a businessman.

Earlier on different dates, Mamun had given confessional statements to the same magistrate in connection with three other extortion cases filed with Gulshan, Kafrul and Dhanmondi police stations.

SEE PAGE 19 COL 7

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