

Court suspends

FROM PAGE 1
responsible for that?"

Asked about what she would do if she is allowed to return to Bangladesh, Hasina said, "I will place myself before the court. You know, politically and also judicially I will try to fight it back. Because my conscience is clear. I know I have not committed any such crime."

About the interim government's support for "reforms" inside the political parties, Hasina said, "Our people should take decision who will lead them and who will be leader of the country. It's not the job of an interim government."

If an un-elected and unconstitutional government runs for a long period, then there would be no accountability, she said.

INTERVIEW WITH THE BBC BANGLASESERVICE

Referring to the suspension of arrest warrant against her in a murder case, Hasina told the BBC radio that it is the reflection of people's desire. She alleged that the government is doing unethical activities as the same government is filing case against her and at the same time barring her from returning home.

By suspending arrest warrant, the government has already proved that the charges are false, Hasina said.

Terminating the ban on her returning home 'a violation of human rights', Hasina asked the interim government to withdraw the ban.

Asked about her next plans, Hasina said, "I am communicating with different leaders in my country as well as in London. We will create world opinion against the present government in Bangladesh."

She replied negatively when asked about any communication with the government in Dhaka. Hasina declined to comment on any discussion with her party leaders.

"I will face the situation legally and politically. I am not in fear of any consequence," Hasina said adding that she is ready for any sacrifice for people.

UNB reports: The government restriction on AL chief Sheikh Hasina's return to the country was raised during the meeting between Foreign Affairs Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury and British Foreign Secretary Margaret Beckett in London.

The bilateral meeting between the two was held at British Foreign and Commonwealth Office on April 19.

"We have sought clarification of the caretaker government's decision and the foreign secretary raised the issue in her meeting with the Bangladeshi foreign affairs adviser," a spokesman for the British High Commission in Dhaka said yesterday, a day after the former prime minister was barred from boarding a British Airways flight.

In reply to a question, the spokesman said, "Throughout the state of emergency we have consistently emphasised in our engagement with the caretaker government the need to balance concerns over stability and security with respect for individuals' rights and democratic processes."

Foreign Adviser Chowdhury, on his return from London, declined to make any comment to the media about the restriction on Hasina's homecoming.

Asked whether the government would respond to the explanation sought by the British High Commission regarding the press note that embargoed Hasina's return, a senior foreign ministry official said they have not received any written communication about the matter.

HASINA'S ARREST WARRANT STALLED

A Dhaka court yesterday suspended the operation of the arrest warrants issued on Sunday against former prime minister and Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina and two others in connection with the Paltan killings on October 28 last year, reports our court correspondent.

Metropolitan Magistrate Mir Ali Reza passed the order following a petition submitted by the investigation officer (IO) of the case seeking further investigation into the case and suspension of operation of the arrest warrants against Hasina and two others.

The court also directed the IO to probe the matter and fixed May 28 for submission of the probe report.

The same court on Sunday issued arrest warrants against Hasina, former home minister and AL leader Mohammad Nasim and AL activist Kiron alias Abdul Malek after accepting the charge sheet in connection with the Paltan killings.

They were shown absconding in the charge sheet even though Nasim was still in jail custody.

The IO had prayed to the court for the issuance of arrest warrants against the accused "fugitives" and confiscating their properties.

After scrutinising the case docket and other relevant documents, Metropolitan Magistrate Mir Ali Reza had passed the order on the IO's plea for issuance of arrest warrants against them.

However, the court did not pass any order on the IO's plea for confiscating their movable properties.

In yesterday's petition, Sub-inspector Enamul Haque of Detective Branch of police, also the IO of the case, mentioned that he had

Salehi

FROM PAGE 1

earlier investigated the matter and found evidence against a number of people involved with the killings but he did not collect their correct names and addresses. So, he failed to include their names in the charge sheet, the IO added.

He said further investigation into the incident is required to collect the correct names and addresses of those involved with the killings.

Moreover, the operation of the arrest warrants issued earlier against Hasina, Nasim and Kiron should be postponed until the investigation completes, the IO added.

Putting off the operation of the arrest warrants against them, the court directed the IO to probe into the matter again.

On April 11, police pressed charges against Hasina, AL General Secretary Abdul Jalil, Workers Party President Rashed Khan Menon, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal President Hasanul Haque Inu and 42 others for killing five Jamaat-e-Islami activists and injuring several others.

Of them, Roymohon Shil, Omar Faruq and Sumon are now in jail custody.

Forty others including Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya, DR HBM Iqbal and Jahangir Kabir Nanak were earlier granted bail from the High Court (HC).

The IO dropped the names of Abdur Razzak, Tofail Ahmed and 14 others from the charge sheet, as he did not find evidence indicating their involvement in the killings.

Prior to the caretaker government's taking over power on October 28, seven people were killed in a fierce clash between activists of AL-led 14-party alliance and Jamaat-e-Islami in Paltan area. A day later, Workers Party and Jamaat filed separate cases in connection with the same incident with Paltan Police Station.

CASE AGAINST NIZAMI The murder case filed against Jamaat Amir Matir Rahman Nizami and nine others, in connection with the killing of a Workers Party activist on October 28 last year, was sent to the Dhaka Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court for trial yesterday.

The IO of the case, AKM Idris Hossain, sub-inspector of the Detective Branch of Police, pressed charges against 10 leaders of Jamaat-e-Islami and Islami Chhatra Shibir in connection with the killing of Workers Party activist Rasel Ahmed Khan.

The prosecution said on October 28 last year activists of Jamaat and its student wing Shibir gathered in front of the north gate of Baitul Mukarram mosque and launched an attack on the AL-led 14-party alliance activists when they were passing through the area.

The attack sparked a fierce street fight between the rival political activists. During the battle, Shibir activists were seen shooting from their firearms, the prosecution said.

Their rivals also reportedly launched a counter attack with bows and arrows.

2 top leaders

FROM PAGE 1

Anisuzzaman, Fayed Ahmed, Ataus Samad, Hamida Hossain, Syed Shamsul Haque, Quaiyum Chowdhury, Anwara Syed Haque, Mamzuddin Ahmed, and Ferdous Majumdar.

They added, "Citizens want those guilty of looting state property and extreme corruption to be brought before the court through legal procedures, but they do not want extra-legal processes."

"We are urging the present caretaker government to reassess and analyse the measures it has already taken," they said.

"The government has to show foresight and acute judgment in every step they take with intentions to bring necessary changes and reforms while suspending the people's fundamental rights," the intellectuals said.

"In parallel with political reforms, the intra-party reforms and democratic practice carry special importance for the future of the nation," they said, adding, "We hope necessary steps to this end will be taken from within the political parties."

"In this regard, any change brought about by pressures from above cannot bring any good results. Instead, the ethical and regulatory pressures from governmental reforms would be positive and fruitful in this context," they said, adding, "It is of special importance that the government take responsible and well thought out measures."

HASINA'S ARREST

A Dhaka court yesterday suspended the operation of the arrest warrants issued on Sunday against former prime minister and Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina and two others in connection with the Paltan killings on October 28 last year, reports our court correspondent.

Metropolitan Magistrate Mir Ali Reza passed the order following a petition submitted by the investigation officer (IO) of the case seeking further investigation into the case and suspension of operation of the arrest warrants against Hasina and two others.

The court also directed the IO to probe the matter and fixed May 28 for submission of the probe report.

The same court on Sunday issued arrest warrants against Hasina, former home minister and AL leader Mohammad Nasim and AL activist Kiron alias Abdul Malek after accepting the charge sheet in connection with the Paltan killings.

They were shown absconding in the charge sheet even though Nasim was still in jail custody.

The IO had prayed to the court for the issuance of arrest warrants against the accused "fugitives" and confiscating their properties.

After scrutinising the case docket and other relevant documents, Metropolitan Magistrate Mir Ali Reza had passed the order on the IO's plea for issuance of arrest warrants against them.

The current caretaker government took charge at one stage of the people's protests, resistance and struggle against the administration's politicisation and black money's dominance.

"We want to see the success of this initiative and hope for the establishment of a strengthened democratic ideals and regulations," the statement said.

Mamun confesses

FROM PAGE 1

construction business if he failed to meet their demand.

Earlier on March 28, Tarique was shown arrested in another case filed with Gulshan Police Station for extorting Tk 81 lakh from a businessman.

MAMUN CASES

Meanwhile, Tarique's close friend Mamun yesterday confessed his involvement in extorting Tk 10.31 crore.

Khairul Bashir, managing director of Abdul Munem Ltd, filed the case with Shahbagh Police Station on April 9.

Dhamondi police also brought Mamun on a two-day remand yesterday in connection with a case, also filed by Kairul Bashir with Dhamondi Police Station on April 17, for extorting Tk 1.17 crore.

Heavily guarded by police, Mamun was taken to the chamber of Metropolitan Magistrate ABM Abdul Fattah at around 2.00pm. The magistrate recorded his statement for two hours.

Mamun told the magistrate that he along with six others extorted the amount on different dates between 2001 and 2006. The six others are Obaidul Haque, Khanabandhu, Qamruzzaman, Mahbub, Manik, Hablu and Mota Tareq.

According to the plaintiff, Mamun used to visit his office with several goons each time.

Mamun demanded the money identifying himself as a friend of Tarique Rahman while his goons threatened him to stop his construction business if he failed to meet their demands, added the complainant.

Earlier on different dates,

ADP

FROM PAGE 16

to around Tk 20,000, sources said, adding that this would be done not because of resource constraint but because of lack of implementation capacity of the ministries concerned.

Planning ministry sources said a number of 'unnecessary projects' would also be omitted from the ADP to lessen the burden on the budget.

The government would make cuts in the revenue budget while spending for law and order enforcement and the election might go up.

The FCC observed a healthy GDP growth and improvements in remittance, exports and foreign exchange reserve.

The meeting expressed concern over high inflation rate. It however noted that government measures have reined in high credit growth, which is partly responsible for pushing up inflation.

Farveez Maharoof has made a strong case for selection ahead of Dilhara Fernando for the match.

Fernando secured his spot in the eleven with impressive performances against India and England but suffered an ankle injury against Australia. Maharoof, who replaced him against Ireland, was adjudged man-of-the-match for his haul of four for 25.

"I will give 200 per cent in the match and I would back myself to perform," Maharoof told. "We have played really well so far. It will be a case of continuing to give it our best."

Upul Tharanga, the out-form opener, looks all set to retain his place in the line-up amid reports that former captain Marvan Atapattu could replace him. Tharanga has managed only 17 runs in the last three innings but has been assured of his place by Asantha de Mel, the chairman of Sri Lankan selectors.

"We must not forget that Tharanga scored two centuries against England last year and also scored two centuries in the Champions Trophy," de Mel said.

"In this World Cup also he was the highest scorer with 65 against India."

Jeetan Patel, the New Zealand off-spinner, was not so optimistic about gaining a spot in the semifinal line-up in spite of taking two for 48 against Australia. "I've heard Jamaica is a dirty, green seamer and Barbados is hard and bouncy, so I'm not sure how much more action I'm going to see," Patel told the Dominion Post, a New Zealand newspaper.

"I wasn't sure of my place in the squad because I wasn't sure how the wickets here would play. But so far it has been very good."

They said although the country returned to democracy in the early 1990s, a certain self-interested group turned governance into an arena where they could do anything they want, instead of expanding people's rights and power.

"Centralisation of every level of the administration and the dominance of black money turned the country's democratic process into a farce," they said.

The current caretaker government took charge at one stage of the people's protests, resistance and struggle against the administration's politicisation and black money's dominance.

"We want to see the success of this initiative and hope for the establishment of a strengthened democratic ideals and regulations," the statement said.

Paltan killing case

FROM PAGE 16

Court granted them ad interim anticipatory bail.

A division bench, headed by Justice MA Matin, upon an application, passed the order and asked them to surrender to the lower court during this time.

Barrister Shafique Ahmed assisted by Advocate Jahangir Hossain Selim appeared for the petitioners.

Meanwhile, a metropolitan court on Sunday issued arrest warrants against AL chief Sheikh Hasina and two others in the case. However, the same court yesterday suspended operation of the arrest warrants until May 28, the date set for the next hearing of the case.

The KEPZ, by its size and invest-

Mainul, Matin

FROM PAGE 1

Chairperson Khaleda Zia or about the other political developments.

He, however, briefed them about a meeting on various development projects in the shipping sector.

Meanwhile, Law Adviser Mainul Hossain met a scrum of newspaper and TV reporters as he came out of a meeting at the information ministry.

"We are a non-political caretaker government and so I should say nothing about politics," he said when the newsmen wanted to know the latest about the probability of Khaleda going into exile and the arrest warrant against Hasina.

"I don't know," he replied curtly when asked if the government had requested the British Airways not to carry Hasina home.

As to whether Khaleda Zia would be produced before the court, the law adviser said, "The court will decide on the matter."

"The political situation is difficult and I do not have answers of all the questions," he observed when a journalist wanted to know how the government seeks Interpol's help to get back crime suspects or convicts from abroad while on the other hand, bars another accused from returning to the country.

CA asks expats

FROM PAGE 16

big cities of the next-door neighbours.

The communications ministry has been asked to make the preparations by June this year.

"The main objective of my visit was to see how quickly we can provide the customs and immigration services to the passengers," Ismail told The Daily Star yesterday.

He said the government would try to start the journey from Dhaka Cantonment Station and provide the custom and immigration facilities there.

The Bangladesh Railways had already established broad gauge rail lines up to the cantonment station, sources said.

"Hopefully, we would be able to complete the preparations by June this year," another high official of the ministry of communications said.

However, the actual date of official launching of the service would be decided following further discussions between the two governments, he said.

The trains would have the facilities for passengers to travel in different classes. The price of the tickets would be fixed on the basis of class, sources said.

BNP leaders