

Hasina moves to challenge homecoming bar in court

Lawyers ask govt to remove restriction on her

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A representative of Sheikh Hasina yesterday moved to file a writ petition with the High Court (HC), challenging legality of the government press note that bars the Awami League (AL) president from returning home.

Meanwhile, 600 lawyers of the Supreme Court (SC) and 31 leading intellectuals in separate statements yesterday called for an immediate withdrawal of restric-

tions on Hasina's coming home. The same day Sammito Nari Samaj asked the government to ensure that the top leaders of the two major political parties are free to stay in the country.

WRIT PETITION
Hasina's Protocol Officer Manzila Faruque and her lawyers went to an HC bench for permission to file the petition. But the bench asked them to come tomorrow as that (Thursday) is the day for the court to receive fresh petitions.

"We went to file a petition but the court has advised us to come on Thursday," said Mahbub Alam, one of the counsels.

The lawyers said they expect a hearing to take place on Sunday, given that the HC would receive the affidavit on the intended petition tomorrow.

Barrister Shafique Ahmed yesterday told The Daily Star that Manzila has been given the power of attorney to act on behalf of Hasina regarding legal matters.

Earlier, the government on April 18 issued the press note. It said if allowed to enter, she might attempt to preach hatred among the public and disrupt the law and order.

Besides challenging the legality of the press note, Manzila plans to seek a court directive asking the government to 'remove all barriers to the former prime minister's entry'.

In her petition, Faruque argues that it is a constitutional right of a

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

UK hopes emergency to be lifted soon

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

British High Commissioner to Bangladesh Anwar Choudhury yesterday said the UK hoped that the present caretaker government would lift the state of emergency soon and set a detailed roadmap for the next election.

The UK also stressed the importance of the Bangladesh government's commitment to proper process and human rights, he told reporters after a meeting with Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) ATM Shamsul Huda.

"I stressed that it was important that the government demonstrate commitment to due process and

SEE PAGE 15 COL 5

BNP hails Hasina's remark on Khaleda

Feuding factions reiterate their allegiance to party chairperson

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Appreciating Sheikh Hasina's recent remark on Khaleda Zia's possible exile, Brig (ret'd) Hannan Shah yesterday said it seems to him that political parties might end up launching a simultaneous movement like the ones in the 1990s.

Earlier, Hasina during a TV interview said she does not support

the pressure on Khaleda for going into self-exile.

BNP joint secretary general and the official spokesperson of the party, Nazrul Islam Khan, also said yesterday, "We thank Sheikh Hasina for her good remarks about Khaleda Zia."

Meanwhile, the intra-party conflict among BNP leaders turned

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

PALTAN KILLINGS

Nizami, 9 others asked to appear in court May 8

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday asked Jamaat-e-Islami chief Matiur Rahman Nizami and nine others to appear before it on May 8 in connection with the killing of a Workers Party activist Russell Ahmed Khan on October 28 last year.

After scrutinising the case docket (CD) and other relevant documents, Judge Momin Ullah of the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court set the date. The court also

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

Tarique shown held in another extortion case

MK Alamgir, Nadim Mostofa sued

STAR REPORT

Detained BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Tarique Rahman was shown arrested yesterday in a Tk 1.32 crore extortion case filed with Gulshan Police Station on March 27.

Earlier on Monday and on March 28, Tarique was shown arrested in two other extortion cases filed with Gulshan and Dhanmendi police stations for extorting Tk 81 lakh and Tk 53 lakh from two businessmen on different dates.

Metropolitan Magistrate Selina

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1



Tarique Rahman

Iftekhar leaves for Yangon today

Accord on direct road link likely

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh and Myanmar are likely to sign agreements on direct road link and avoidance of double taxation during Foreign Affairs Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury's four-day official visit to Yangon, beginning today.

In Yangon, the foreign adviser is expected to hold bilateral talks with Secretary-1 and Acting Prime Minister Lt General Thein Sein, Foreign Minister Nyan Win and other dignitaries, a foreign ministry press release said yesterday.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

3 killed, 160 hurt as storm lashes 6 dists

STAR REPORT

Three people were killed, 160 others injured and over 1800 houses damaged as nor'wester lashed six districts--Kushtia, Meherpur, Chuadanga, Rangpur, Kurigram and Brahmanbaria--yesterday.

Our Kushtia correspondent reported that the storm started lashing the three districts in the evening and lasted for 19 minutes, killing three people and injuring over 100 in Gangni and Mujibnagar upazilas of Meherpur and in Daulatpur upazila of Kushtia.

The dead were identified as Nasrin, 13, of Baliaghat village under Gangni upazila and Maria,

32, of Munakhali village under Mujibnagar upazila of Meherpur, and Azizul, 42, under Daulatpur upazila in Kushtia.

Of the injured, 30 were admitted to Kushtia General Hospital, while the rest given first aid.

Standing crops were damaged and a large number of trees uprooted by the storm in the three districts.

In Rangpur, the storm accompanied by heavy rain swept over Rangpur Sadar, Kounia and Gangachara upazilas at around 5:00am, damaging at least 1500 houses and injuring 50 people.

Standing tri-boro crops on about 1000 hectares of land were

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

TOP DEFAULTER MOHAMMAD ALI

Sonali's Tk 129cr interest waiver surprises many

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

While the government's anti-corruption drive continues, the state-owned Sonali Bank has waived Tk 129 crore interest on loans taken by one of the top loan defaulters, Mohammad Ali, also a business leader.

The Board of Directors of Sonali Bank at a meeting with its Chairman and Cabinet Secretary Ali Imam Majumder in the chair approved a proposal in this regard

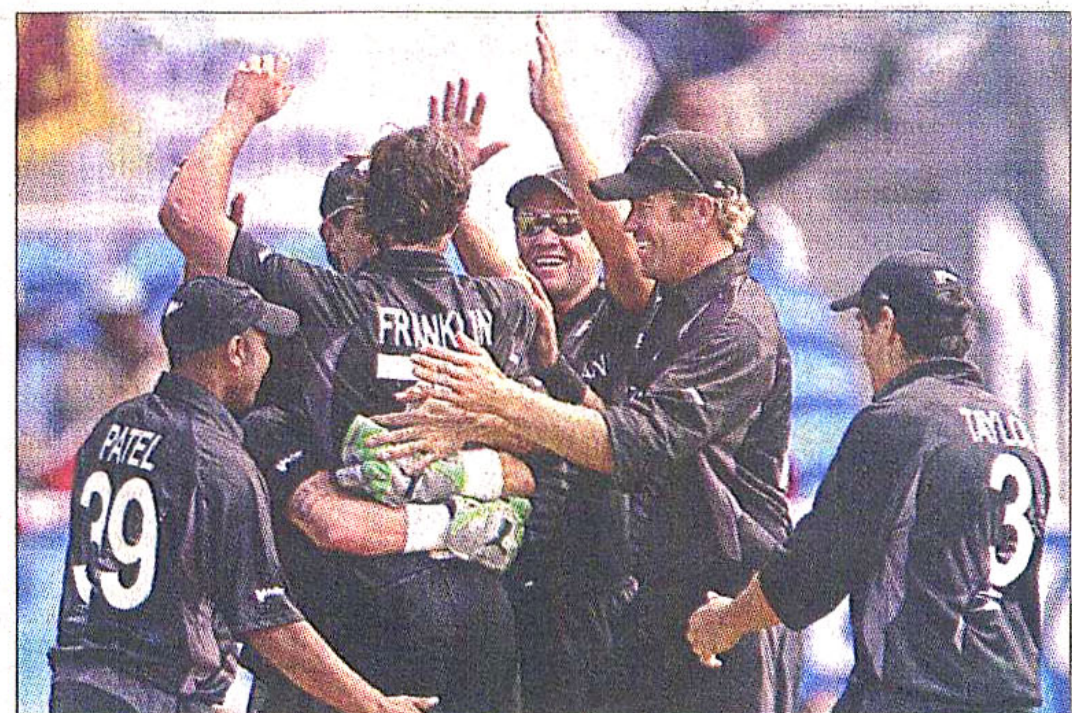


Mohammad Ali

on April 17. Mohammad Ali, Vice President of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI), has Tk 165 crore outstanding loans with Sonali Bank. The loans were taken against Dhaka Vegetable Oil Industries Ltd, of which Mohammad Ali is chairman and managing director.

The interest was waived on condition that the borrower would pay back principal amount and

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3



New Zealand paceman James Franklin (2nd from L) is the toast of his teammates after he bowled Sri Lanka opener Sanath Jayasuriya (not in picture) early in the first semifinal of the World Cup at Sabina Park in Jamaica yesterday.

Tharanga keeps SL up

STAR SPORT MONITOR

Left-arm paceman James Franklin struck twice as Sri Lanka reached 111 for two after 25 overs in their World Cup semifinal against New Zealand at Sabina Park in Kingston, Jamaica on Tuesday.

But despite the early dismissal of dangerous Sanath Jayasuriya (1), other opener Upul Tharanga steadied the innings with a solid half-century.

The left-hander was batting on 72 with captain Mahela Jayawardene on nine.

Jayasuriya was the first man out for the 1996 champions when he was clean bowled hitting across the line off a Franklin delivery in the third over with the score on 13.

Wicketkeeper-batman Kumar Sangakkara was caught by New Zealand captain Stephen Fleming at mid-on for 18 off Franklin in the 14th over with the score on 67.

Earlier, Sri Lanka won the toss and decided to bat.

New Zealand welcomed back

fast bowler Shane Bond and pace bowling all-rounder Jacob Oram who missed Friday's 215-run defeat by Australia. Off-spinner Jeetan Patel retained his place.

Sri Lanka's unorthodox fast bowler Lasith Malinga returned to the team after three games out with ankle ligament damage and Dilhara Fernando also returned after missing the team's last match, an eight-wicket thrashing of minnows Ireland, with an ankle problem.

Under-pressure opener Tharanga retained his place, seeing off the challenge of the experienced Marvan Atapattu.

When the teams met in a Super Eight match in Grenada on April 12, Sri Lanka won by six wickets.

The Kiwis got off to a great start on Tuesday thanks to Franklin. Jayasuriya tried to turn the lanky pacer on the on-side but missed the ball completely and his stumps were castled.

Tharanga got off the mark with a

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

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