

Tarique's release

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for treatment after getting bail from the HC, he said.

"This is nothing but to keep Khaleda Zia under pressure." Anwar told The Daily Star, hoping that the Supreme Court (SC) would judge the matter impartially.

Meanwhile, a section of government policymakers said they believe that releasing Khaleda and Tarique on bail might have an adverse impact on politicians and people since Awami League (AL) President Sheikh Hasina was released on an executive order.

"Release of a highly corrupt detainee like Tarique may establish him as a clean person," said a source in the government, adding that even a new case would be filed against Tarique if the SC judgment goes in his favour.

Several advisers to the caretaker government have been saying Khaleda would be released the same way followed for Hasina.

THEAPPEALS

The attorney general's office filed the petitions on behalf of the government and the ACC for filing regular leaves to appeal with the apex court against the HC bail orders.

The attorney general's office has also informed the jail authorities about filing of the appeals so that they do not release Tarique, sources said.

The vacation bench of chamber judge of the Appellate Division is likely to hear the petitions today.

Tarique's counsel barrister Mahbubuddin Khokon yesterday told The Daily Star that he heard about the petitions but his advocate-on-record did not receive any copy of them.

The hearing of the stay petitions will be held at the court of the chamber judge of the Appellate Division this morning, he said.

"If the Appellate Division stays the High Court bail orders, Tarique cannot get released from jail. If the chamber judge does not stay the orders, there will not be any legal bar to his getting released," barrister Khokon said.

A full bench of the Appellate Division earlier granted bail to Tarique after examining his medical report prepared by a medical board, so the chamber judge should not stay the HC bail orders, he added.

He said Tarique has secured bail in all the 13 cases filed against him and the HC also stayed proceedings against him in all these cases.

Responding to separate bail prayers, the HC last week granted an interim bail to Tarique in 12 cases filed by the ACC, the government and individual persons. Even the SC granted Tarique bail on August 28 in a bribery case paving the way for his release.

Of the total 13 cases filed against Tarique, eight are for extortion and

the rest for corruption, tax evasion and bribery.

CASEAGAINSTMOUDUD

Moudud was sued for evading Tk 41.2 crore in income tax while Pintu and his wife Nasima Akhter Kalpana were charged with dodging Tk 11.2 crore and Tk 98.26 lakh in income tax respectively.

BNR deputy tax commissioners Hafiz Al Asad and Ayesha Siddiqui Shelly filed the cases with the Dhaka Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court against them.

After the hearing, Judge Mohammad Azizul Haque recorded statements of the complainants and took the charges into cognisance against the three under the provisions of Income Tax Ordinance 1984.

The court also issued arrest warrant against Kalpana and directed the jail authorities to produce Moudud and Pintu before the court on September 3 for next hearing in the cases.

In his complaint, Asad mentioned that Moudud evaded Tk 41,232,654 in income tax from 1997 to 2006.

Moudud concealed information about his wealth worth Tk 164,930,631 from the NBR department and gave false information to the income tax department about his real income and expenditure, Asad added.

Police filed a case against Moudud on August 27 on charges of stash away Tk 2.2 crore in a bank through forged documents. He was shown arrested in the case the same day.

The HC earlier granted bails to Moudud in three cases filed against him on different charges.

Moudud was arrested at his Gulshan residence on April 13 last year with 16 bottles of foreign liquor, 32 cans of beer and 220 pieces of sari belonging to the government relief fund.

CASEAGAINSTPINTU

NBR Deputy Tax Commissioner Ayesha in her complaint said Pintu evaded Tk 112,231,777 in income tax from 2001 to 2007.

He also concealed information about his wealth worth Tk 448,927,110 from the NBR department and gave false information about his real income and expenditure, the complainant added.

Pintu, an accused in a number of cases, was sent to jail on February 12 last year after he surrendered to a Dhaka court seeking bail in two criminal cases.

CASEAGAINSTKALPANA

The same complainant said Kalpana evaded Tk 9,826,314 in income tax from 2001 to 2007 and concealed information about her wealth worth Tk 23,305,265 from the NBR, the complainant added.

EC regrets BNP

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registration of political parties. In the invitation, it addressed him as the secretary general.

In November last year, against a backdrop of bitter disputes between the factions for a berth in the discussions on electoral reforms, the EC invited Hafiz, acting secretary general appointed by the standing committee at a controversial meeting on October 29.

The decision caused an uproar. Pro-Khaleda group led by Delwar rejected it outright while those siding with Saifur Rahman and expelled secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan took it as recognition that they represent the mainstream BNP.

In defence, the CEC then said they had followed the "doctrine of necessity" in deciding to invite Hafiz. He claimed they had taken the right decision and there was nothing to do about it.

He went on to describe the detained BNP chairperson's decision to expel Bhuiyan as unacceptable for not following "appropriate procedure".

Angered, pro-Khaleda leaders filed a writ petition challenging the legality of the EC's invite to Hafiz, and the ensuing legal wrangling caused the commission's preparations for RPO amendments to remain suspended for a long time.

Meanwhile, speaking at yesterday's discussion, leaders of different political parties said it would be difficult to hold national councils to amend their constitutions at such short notice.

According to a recent EC announcement, political parties must apply by October 15 for registration on meeting a set of criteria laid out in the revised RPO.

Major political parties including Awami League (AL), BNP and Jatiya Party have maintained that the deadline doesn't allow them enough time to fulfil the conditions.

About the time constraints, Huda yesterday said, "If there were no troubles, we would have finalised the RPO at least three months ago."

Turning to other issues, he said recruitments to the EC are very crucial to its functioning independently. "If we set standards for the political parties, we must strive for improved standards in the commission."

He said the EC plans some measures including amendments to the existing laws to ensure reduced election expenditure. In the August 4 local polls, overt spending by the candidates came down significantly, but transactions in secret could not be checked.

"Things will not change over-

Dhaka, Delhi

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expeditiously," says the joint statement.

It says verification process of released prisoners of one country held in the prisons of other should be expedited and modalities in this regard will be worked out.

The Indian side led by its Home Secretary Madhukar Gupta offered Bangladesh to hand over their convicted prisoners, but Dhaka agreed on to extradite those who finished their terms.

Bangladesh is not considering India's proposal, said senior home ministry officials attending the talks.

Both the sides, however, agreed to build up a mechanism to expedite the process of repatriation of the prisoners who completed their jail terms.

"We can't hand over the convicted persons who have not finished their terms," Bangladesh Home Secretary Abdul Karim told a joint briefing held at the home ministry in the afternoon.

Karim, who led an 18-member delegation at the talks, also confirmed that anti-state activities against any country including friendly neighbour India will not be allowed to take place.

Asked about reported imprisonment of Ulfa leader Anup Chetia in Bangladesh and his extradition, he said, "We're not talking about a single person; rather, the efforts are to deal with all the prisoners."

The Indian home secretary told journalists, "We have assured the Bangladeshi government that no political activities will be allowed against any country, including Bangladesh."

Gupta also assured his counterpart of reducing killings on the borders by their Border Security Force (BSF). Abdul Karim also said attention would be made to reduce the number of killings, if not fully stopped.

The meeting did not make any headway on demarcation of 6.5 kilometres of unmarked border and other border-related issues like Tin-Bigha Corridor where Bangladeshis are living in a hostage-like situation.

The two sides, however, agreed to convene a meeting of the Joint Boundary Working Group at an early date to discuss all outstanding boundary-related issues.

Both the sides expressed sincere desires to further expand and strengthen bilateral cooperation to solve matters related to security and border management.

"Both sides condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and reaffirmed commitment not to allow their territory to be used for any activities inimical to each other's interests," reads the joint statement.

Terminating smuggling of arms and ammunition, explosives and fake currency notes a serious threat to peace and security. Bangladesh and India have agreed to find out the elements engaged in such illegal activities and bring them to justice.

The neighbours have also agreed on sharing information about trafficking of women and children, fighting illicit drugs smuggling to curb the cross-border menace.

The next home secretary-level talks will be held in New Delhi.

Fire in city

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traffic for over two hours while firefighters were dousing the blaze which had originated from a leak in the CNG line of the minivan which was burnt to ashes.

Witnesses said the fire originated from the minivan which was parked in the underground parking lot of Ft Tower (Faruk Rupayan Tower) around 3:45pm, creating dense smoke which rose up to the 18th floor seeping onto them.

According to the witnesses, after the fire broke out about 200 people were able to rush out of the building immediately while several hundred others went to the roof of the building, many of whom leapt off to the adjacent 22-storey Ayal Centre.

Meanwhile, at least 30 others jumped off to the rooftop of another adjacent three-storey building.

Samsuzzoha, deputy assistant director (DAD) of Fire Service and Civil Defence told The Daily Star, "The CNG line of the minivan was leaking and when the driver tried to start the vehicle, it caught fire creating smoke and panic."

The fire department DAD also said they had to break down glass facades and doors on different floors to let the smoke out.

Fire department sources said at least 10 of their units fought for more than an hour to put the fire out.

Pay Commission

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Habibur Rahman have been appointed full-time members of the paybody.

Vice-chancellors of Agricultural University, Islamic University and Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University and representatives from Buet, finance ministry and Armed Forces Division will serve as part-time members.

In his June 9 budget speech, Finance Adviser AB Mirza Azizul Islam proposed constitution of a pay commission at the beginning of fiscal year 2008-2009.

The first pay commission was formed in 1972 and followed by four more in 1976, 1984, 1989 and 1996.

He said the EC plans some measures including amendments to the existing laws to ensure reduced election expenditure. In the August 4 local polls, overt spending by the candidates came down significantly, but transactions in secret could not be checked.

"Things will not change over-

Upazila polls

FROM PAGE 1

prior permission of the local police authorities.

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