

## Musharraf won't return home now

PTI, Islamabad

With his tenure as president of Pakistan coming up for scrutiny by the country's highest court, Pervez Musharraf has put off his return here from London for the time being as advised by his close aides.

Musharraf, who had consulted legal luminaries to represent him in the Supreme Court in his defence, has made a sudden about turn to defer his return to Pakistan, fuelling speculation whether he would come back to the country to face trial.

The Supreme Court had last week asked Musharraf to appear before it and explain his action of imposing Emergency in 2007 and sacking of 60 judges, including Chief Justice Iftikhar Mohammed Chaudhary.

The News reported yesterday that Musharraf was advised by his aides to delay his return as they feel that his adversaries may drag him to court on various counts and also because some extremist groups have become active in the wake of speculation regarding his coming back to Pakistan.

The former army chief has been consulting his aides, including legal experts and serving and retired military personnel, since the Supreme Court issued the notice asking him to explain his actions at a hearing scheduled for July 29. It is not binding for Musharraf to appear personally in court and he has hired lawyers to represent him.

## AL leaders

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some criticisms for not balloting for electing the ruling party's new leaderships.

PM's Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad briefed newsmen after the meeting.

Hasina noted that party councillors at the 20th council, held on July 24, unanimously elected their new president and general secretary.

The councillors have also unanimously authorised the new president and the general secretary to constitute the full committee.

"After the council 2002, the leaderships in the party units of 64 districts, 481 upazilas, 309 pourasabhas, 4498 union parishads and 40482 wards were elected completely in a democratic way. So AL fights for democracy, practices democracy and democracy exists inside the party on a full scale," she said.

Hasina said there were arrangements for ballot in the council session, but voting did not take place as there were no other candidates for the posts.

She mentioned that AL during the last general election had also followed the direction of the election commission for finalising candidature by the grassroots level.

She thanked the party leaders and workers for successfully holding the 20th council.

Hasina said the way the party grassroots leaders have given their labour for holding

A petition is likely to be submitted by one of his counsel before the Supreme Court seeking the adjournment of the matter so that Musharraf can study the case, the report said.

Musharraf has not been classified as a defendant or witness in the matter but his status could be altered once the proceedings get underway in the apex court.

A close associate of the former president has revealed that he has been provided an additional four sleuths by Scotland Yard immediately after some political leaders in London threatened him.

The former military ruler has planned to deliver lectures at some European universities in the next four weeks.

He could change his plan due to fears of protests.

Sources close to Musharraf claim that he has no problem in staying on in London where he has purchased a flat.

In case he faces difficulty in living in London, Musharraf could move to California where his son Bilal lives. It is yet to be determined how the US administration would react to any move by Musharraf to enter the country.

Musharraf could also shift to Chicago, where his brother lives. Sources said Musharraf would decide about his future course of action in September and till then would avoid returning to Pakistan.

He is in constant touch with his aides and could seek their advice before making any final decision on returning home.

the council within a short time is an example of their love towards inner-party democracy.

"It is my strong belief that the party leaders and activists will continue to work to safeguard the democracy in the party as well as in the country."

"AL is the party that has led the nation from the front in every democratic movement of the country. This is Awami League, which, along with the country's patriotic people, had attained independence in 1971," she told the Swachhasebak league leaders.

She urged the party faithful to devote themselves to service of the people rising above personal desires and greed.

"We have been voted to power to serve the people. Earn people's love and trust by working hard for their betterment. For a politician, nothing can be worthy than people's love."

Hasina said if the government and a well-disciplined party like AL can work in a coordinated way, the days are not so far off when the dream of a modern, prosperous Bangladesh would come true.

She called upon the party workers to discharge their respective duties with utmost honesty and integrity to turn Bangladesh into a digital one by 2021.

Swachhasebak League President Bahauddin Nasim and General Secretary Pankaj Devnath, among others, were present.

## Tipai delegation

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During the discussions, the delegation will ask for more data from the feasibility and impact assessment studies of India. Dhaka may request New Delhi to carry out a joint study on the proposed dam.

According to preliminary reports, India has constructed an approach road and a project office at the dam site, 210km upstream of the Boark from Bangladesh border. The project aims at generating 1,500 megawatt of electricity.

"First of all, we will see if there is any structure, second, exactly what India wants to do there, irrigation project or hydro-electricity project including flood-protection embankment, and third if the Tipaimukh project will cause environmental damages only to India or to Bangladesh too," Razzak told BBC Bangla service yesterday evening.

He said it is very unfortunate that the parliamentary delegation could not include anyone from the main opposition, BNP.

"As of now there are eleven members but none from the BNP is going with us that is for sure," he said.

WRIT PETITION

Meanwhile, a writ petition was

filed with the High Court yesterday seeking direction from the court upon the government to take immediate steps to halt the construction of the proposed Tipaimukh Dam.

The petition challenged the government's "inaction" in stopping the construction of the dam.

Abu Naser Rahmatullah, secretary general of Bangladesh Jatiya Party, filed the writ petition as public interest litigation.

The petition also prayed to the court to issue a rule upon the government to explain as to why its decision on sending a parliamentary team to visit the Tipaimukh site, without having exact information and data regarding the dam from India, should not be declared illegal.

The lawyer for the petitioner Tajul Islam told The Daily Star that the hearing on the petition would be held tomorrow.

All the international laws regarding the construction of dams stand in favour of Bangladesh but the government is not taking any initiatives to stop the construction, he said, adding that the national interest would be hurt if India constructs the dam.

## Hasina

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outcomes from the change-over including a flawless voter list that led to a free and fair parliamentary election. If you continue speaking negatively against the changeover then questions may arise about those positive outcomes."

She had already warned her party leader Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir to this end, sources said.

Talking to The Daily Star a senior minister said the prime minister explained the January, 2007 changeover to her colleagues saying that if the situation had not been created, the stalled January 22, 2007 elections would have been held and a dangerous situation might have developed.

At the meeting, the prime minister expressed unhappiness over Finance Minister AMA Muhith not appointing new officials at top positions of state-owned commercial banks including Sonali, Agrani and Janata Bank.

On July 6, at another cabinet meeting Hasina directed Muhith to appoint neutral persons in the boards of directors of the three banks.

Some ministers also expressed anguish over the finance minister's letters asking different ministries to go through the Economic Relations Division or the finance ministry when dealing with any donor agency.

Finance Minister AMA Muhith termed any ministry's move to directly approach the donor agencies a violation of rule of business.

The prime minister yesterday asked ministries concerned to take all necessary measures to check price hike of essentials ahead of Ramadan. She gave the instructions when a number of ministers informed the cabinet of some goods getting dearer.

## Strike at CNG

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discuss their demands in order to avert the strike.

Energy Secretary Mohammad Mohsin chaired the meeting while officials of Rupantarita Praktitik Gas Company Limited, the licensing authority of CNG pump and conversion business, were present.

The association leaders said that the energy secretary offered them to appeal to Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission (BERC) to reduce the CNG tariffs.

"But, we've rejected the proposal as we think it does not require any BERC nod to decrease the prices. Only a government notification is good enough to reduce the price. BERC nod is required only in that case when the government moves to increase the price," a leader of the CNG association told UNB.

Sources said that the energy secretary requested the CNG pump owners to call off the planned strike. The pump owners would not keep the request.

Finally, the energy secretary told the association leader that he would convey their position to the state minister and the prime minister about the six-point demands.

## Law on security

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Minister's Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad told reporters after a cabinet meeting.

Azad said after the assassination of Bangabandhu and most of his family members on August 15, 1975, many attempts were made on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's life including the August 21, 2004 grenade attack.

He said two surviving daughters of Bangabandhu -- Sheikh Hasina and Sheikh Rehana -- and their children as well, will be entitled to SSF security and other facilities.

He, however, could not say whether the sons and daughters of Hasina and Rehana, living abroad, will also enjoy security.

On July 6, the cabinet approved in principle a draft of the law.

The cabinet yesterday also fixed Sunday to Thursday office hours for the month of Ramadan, from 9:30am to 4:00pm with a 15-minute break for prayers from 2:15pm, for government, semi-government, autonomous, and semi-autonomous organisations.

It also approved the proposed Administrative Tribunals (Amendment) Ordinance 2009, and sent back a proposal regarding amendments to the Code of Criminal Procedure 1898 for further scrutiny.

Ministers, state ministers, and secretaries concerned were present at the meeting chaired by the prime minister.

## AL drops BCL

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body of any other profession," claimed Suranjit, also the chief of parliamentary standing committee on law justice and parliamentary affairs.

Talking to reporters yesterday, Election Commissioner Muhammad Sohul Hussain said the Election Commission (EC) will scrutinise the submitted constitutions of political parties, and if any of them contradicts the RPO, that one will be sent back to the respective party for amendments.

A large number of government doctors all over the country are members of SCP. Since its inception in 1993, SCP has been working as a subsidiary of AL to implement the party's aims and objectives in the sector.

The AL constitution empowers the party's health and population affairs secretary to supervise the activities of SCP, which is also accountable to the AL central working committee through the departmental secretary.

Contacted by The Daily Star on Sunday, M Iqbal Arslan, secretary general of SCP, said the organisation has over 3,000 members across the country, with units at all government medical colleges and hospitals, and at district levels.

Private practitioners are also their members, added Iqbal, also the chairman of the department of biochemistry at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BBSMU). Health Minister AFM Ruhul Haque is the president of SCP.

Since AL's ascension to power numerous news reports alleged that SCP has been exerting controlling influence on government doctors' appointments and transfers, and the last vice-chancellor of BBSMU, Prof Nazrul Islam, was reportedly forced to resign from the post due to pressure from this organisation.

Another leader of SCP said many members of the organisation are also looking for an answer to the question whether they are allowed to be involved in politics under the banner of a political party. "But we are carrying out our political activities, as if there is

no restriction on us," he added.

Although members of SCP are in politics, according to RPO they are not eligible to contest in parliamentary elections until three years have elapsed since their retirement or resignation from government jobs.

AL brought provisional amendments to its constitution in October last year pending its national council, and submitted the provisional constitution to the EC seeking registration. The commission strongly objected to having Chhatra League and Sramik League as the party's associated organisations.

At that time, senior officials of the EC Secretariat suggested that the commission asked AL to drop SCP from the list of associated organisations as well, but the commission did not object to SCP's associated status as forcefully as it did in the case of BCL and Sramik League, EC officials said.

In the face of EC's objection, AL dropped Chhatra League and Sramik League from the list of its associated organisations, and the EC accepted its provisional constitution for its registration.

The AL national council on last Friday ratified the provisional constitution, and the party submitted the new constitution to the EC on Saturday.

Another provision of RPO, says a political party shall not be qualified for registration if there is a provision in its constitution for establishment or operation of any office, branch or committee outside the territory of Bangladesh.

AL deleted a detailed chapter from its previous constitution on organisations abroad, and incorporated in its new constitution a new provision titled 'organisations abroad', which says Bangladesh citizens living abroad permanently or temporarily may form organisations believing in AL's aims, objectives, ideals and policies, abiding by the existing laws of the countries they live in.

## Paracetamol

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samples of controversial paracetamol syrups have been sent for testing following the deaths of about 25 children after taking those in the last one and a half months.

"I was present at the laboratory when some drug samples were being examined, but I can not disclose the result now for the sake of getting reports from other laboratories," Ruhul Haque told The Daily Star.

Those who are responsible for producing fake paracetamols would be given maximum punishment as per law of the land, he said.

The health minister at an interview to a private television channel also said, "People who have played games with the lives of people would not be spared."

He said the government has taken immediate steps for arranging the laboratory test of the paracetamol syrups following deaths of children after taking drugs of some companies.

Ruhul Haque said each of the samples collected from different companies is being kept after coding so that no one can manipulate the result

from the test and publish any biased report.

Meanwhile, the seven-member committee, formed to investigate the deaths of the 25 children, yesterday took two more days to submit report to the health ministry, said convener of the committee Abdul Jalil, also joint secretary (hospital).

The committee yesterday visited five children who are undergoing treatment at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Hospital and Dhaka Shishu Hospital.

The Drug Administration has sent 350 samples of paracetamol to the drug testing laboratory (DTL) at Mohakhali and three other laboratories including Essential Drugs Company Limited, Bangladesh Council of Scientific and Industrial Research.

Abul Khayer, head of the DTL, told The Daily Star that the Drug Administration has sent only two samples of Rid Pharma -- paracetamol and vitamin syrups -- for testing. It will take a week to find out whether diethylene glycol was used in the paracetamol that killed the 25 children or not.

## River project

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change strategies and action plan and deal with the national climate change fund.

Chairperson of All-Party Parliamentary Group on Climate Change and Environment and Awami League lawmaker Saber Hossain Chowdhury, representative of Vietnam Network for Civil Society and Climate Change, Nguyen Huu Ninh, Convener of Campaign Steering Group of CSRL Shirin Akhter and Country Director of Oxfam Heather Blackwell spoke at the conference with Executive Director of Bangladesh Centre for Advance Studies Atiq Rahman in the chair.

Saber Hossain Chowdhury said vulnerable countries should come out with a common ground for negotiations with the developed countries. "Bangladesh has already taken the leadership of the least developed countries in the climate-change field but lots more are needed to be done. The vulnerable countries

should work together even for post-Copenhagen situation as far as climate change is concerned," said Saber.

He said climate change is not only an issue of environmental security for Bangladesh but also an issue of national security.

Heather Blackwell said, "We want a fair and safe deal in Copenhagen, particularly for billions of poor and vulnerable people whose governments cannot afford to pay to fix the problem."

She said the true cost of climate change would not be measured in dollars but in million or billions of lives.

Shirin Akhter said Bangladesh must have a national consensus regarding its stance for negotiation in Copenhagen. It should be discussed and debated in parliament.

Environmentalist Atiq Rahman said about 17 percent of the country's land and 13 percent of agricultural activities would be affected if there is one metre sea-level rise.

## 15 missing as boat sinks in Karnaphuli

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Cg

At least 15 people remain missing as an engine boat capsized in the Karnaphuli channel last night.

Port and police sources said the Dangarchar-bound boat carrying over 50 people from Ishainyarghat of Moheshkhali sank in the river around 10:00pm.

Rescue teams from Chittagong Port and fire service rushed to the spot and started rescue operation with the help of the locals. Some 35 people were rescued while the rest 15 are still traceless, said sources.

## HC stays

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Alam was not allowed to contest the election for which the IFIC board didn't give any explanation.

The High Court asked the IFIC Bank authorities to explain their position about Monirul's candidature.

## Law ministry

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The judicial officials told reporters that they led by Bangladesh Judicial Service Association (BJSA) President Abdul Gafur and Secretary Md Shahjahan Saju entered the law ministry to hold a meeting with the minister to convey their demands.

At the end of the meeting, Deputy Secretary of the home ministry Nazimuddin along with a team of armed police came to the law ministry to check whether the judicial officials followed the official rules while entering the secretariat.

But seeing the police, the judicial officials raised a hue and cry, saying that Law Secretary Kazi Habibul Awal has called in the police to dishonor them.

Shahjahan Saju, a judge of the Women and Children Repression Prevention Tribunal in Gazipur, told reporters that they entered the secretariat with official pass.

The police have misbehaved Aminul Islam, a senior judicial official, in the name of search, he alleged.

## BNP moves

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the top posts of Swachhasebak Dal, party insiders said.

Habib and Mosharraf were BNP candidates in the December 29 parliamentary elections last year.

"Top leaders of the party are facing difficulties in constituting the city unit committee as both Khoka and Abbas have taken a tough stance against each other," said a party source.

Against this backdrop, the party high command is now considering the names of several senior leaders, including former minister Rafiqul Islam Miah, for the post of city BNP convener, the source mentioned.

Some party insiders claim most of the city unit and ward level leaders, and a section of central leaders like Aman Ullah Aman are backing Khoka. And a few former lawmakers including Salauddin Ahmed ('dour' Salauddin) and Nasiruddin Ahmed Pintu, who is in jail now, are siding with Abbas. He also has indirect support from party Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain.

Earlier on June 9, the National Standing Committee of BNP announced the names of conveners and a few joint conveners of 71 out of the party's 75 organisational district units. But it could not take decisions regarding Dhaka city, Dhaka district, Sunamganj and Manikganj district unit committees because of their internal feuds.

Later, Sunamganj unit committee was announced but those of Dhaka city, district and Manikganj committees are yet to be constituted.

Meantime, party Chairperson Khaleda Zia sat with Khoka and Abbas several times to resolve the conflict between them as part of her efforts to form a credible convening committee for the city unit.

A former lawmaker, who also tried for a compromise between the two leaders, said the party cannot allow harm to it due to egoistic attitude of any leaders.

Talking to The Daily Star, he said, "It will be a good decision if any senior leader is picked up as convener of the city committee. I have heard top leaders are thinking about it."

## DA not equipped

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official at the laboratory. But the laboratory housed on the second floor of the Institute of Public Health building is not centrally air-conditioned, he said.

For smooth running of such a laboratory, it also needs protective netting to keep away dusts and insects, he added.

The laboratory also lacks modern equipment to test and identify sub-standard drugs, while some pharmaceutical companies in the country are producing and marketing counterfeit drugs, putting the public health at risk, the official observed.

Drug experts observe that people are at great risk of taking sub-standard drugs, which may even cause their deaths, because of lax monitoring by the government.

The 25 children died after taking paracetamol suspension of Rid Pharmaceutical company in recent time. Earlier in 1992, a total of 339 children had died after taking paracetamol syrups of five companies -- Ad Flame Pharma, BC Laboratories, Polycam Laboratories, Rex Pharma and Pan Asia Pharma. The five companies were closed after drug administration's directive.

Sources at the DA suspect that one of these companies is still producing drugs by taking permission from it under different brand names.

A total of 45 cases are under trial at drug court of the Drug Administration against about 30 drug manufacturers for producing and marketing

spurious and unauthorised drugs in the country, said a source at the DA.

Licence of three drug companies has been cancelled while about 50 licences suspended in the last two years for manufacturing and marketing adulterated drugs, he said. Besides, some 1,073 cases have been filed during adulteration drives of 2007-May 2009.

Since 1984, the workload of the drug administration has increased by about 20 times as now a large number the drug companies are in operation, said another DA official, adding that steps have yet to be taken to fill in these vacant posts. The situation appears to be bleak as some of its employees are going to retire soon.

The DA sources said about 800 drugs companies, including 258 allopathic, unani, ayurvedic and herbal companies, are producing drugs and meeting 97 percent local demands and exporting drugs to about 70 countries.

Assistant Director of the DA, AA Salim Barami told The Daily Star yesterday, "Without strengthening the Drug Administration by recruiting manpower, increasing logistic support and setting up modern laboratories, it would not be possible to monitor all of the companies' thousands of products."

Drug Administration Director Brig Gen M Ismail Hossain said the Drug Administration has sent a proposal to the health ministry to increase its manpower to 745.

Now the total manpower of the Drug Administration is 122.

## Alliance govt's role

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addressing a rally organised by Awami Swachhasebak League at the Central Shaheed Minar to mark its 16th founding anniversary.

Ashrafal also said the people of the country know that these factors were more responsible for the political turmoil that led to the state of emergency.

He said, "If the fake voter list was not prepared, Iajuddin, not selected the chief of the then caretaker government and a pro-BNP justice not made CEC the 1/11 change-over would not take place."

Echoing Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's views he said criticising the last caretaker government flatly would not be right as it had prepared a voter list with photographs, set a neutral election commission and administration and organised a free and fair parliamentary election.

"Criticising the 1/11 leadership would pave the way for its repetition and hinder process of democracy," Ashrafal, also the LGD minister, said quoting Hasina.

He alleged that 26,000 AL leaders and activists were killed during the tenure of the BNP-Jamaat alliance government.

## US-China ties

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comprehensive relationship." "Our two countries should endeavour to expand common ground, reduce differences, enhance mutual trust and strengthen cooperation," Husaid.

Obama, who is expected to travel to China later this year, has sought to broaden the relationship with Beijing, which is now the largest creditor to the heavily indebted United States.

The dialogue revamps an earlier set of talks launched under former US president George W Bush in 2006 that focused solely on economic issues.

But China, whose delegation here is led by State Councillor Dai Bingguo and Vice Premier Wang Qishan, said it would press the United States on concerns including over the safety of its more than \$750 billion invested in US Treasury bonds.

Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner, who is leading the US side along with Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, said that the world's largest developed and developing economies should coordinate their response to the economic crisis.

"China and the United States as leading nations have the opportunity to act not just for the benefit of our own citizens but also for the global economy," Geithner said.

US leaders have generally refrained from describing the China relationship as the "most important" in the world. Clinton used the language during her failed presidential bid, raising concerns among some US allies, particularly Japan.

Clinton yesterday rejected predictions of a "multi-polar world," often used as code-word by Chinese, Russian and other policymakers to signal the end of a US-dominated era.

"Although past relations between the United States and China have been influenced by the idea of a balance of power among great nations, the fresh thinking of the 21st century moves us from a multi-polar world to a multi-partner world," Clinton said.

## 50 hurt in B'baria tornado

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria

At