

Police brutality has seen an alarming rise.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

excess? The home minister knows well. In the past, particularly, since the restoration of the democracy in 1991, almost all the home ministers largely damaged the image of their governments by their unruly attitudes and aggressive use of force against the opposition parties. The way the present home minister has been speaking it gives us the impression that he has waged a war against the opposition parties. It will in no way yield any positive result for the government. Rather, the more the home minister and his police force suppress the opposition parties, the more the opposition will get political mileage. And the present home minister should not forget the fate of his predecessors. Altaf Hossain Chowdhury, the home minister who ordered the attack on the AL office in 2004, was arrested on March 11 from BNP office by the order of the present home minister. Other home ministers including Abdul Matin Chowdhury and Mohammad Nasim had to face police brutality when they took to the streets after their governments were voted out of power.

The March 11 police action however provided the BNP-led opposition a weapon to enforce a two-day countrywide shutdown on March 18 and 19. And another shutdown in Dhaka district on March 21. People suffered a lot due to frequent strikes. Businessmen are worried about their business. They are searching for a way out. But the way some ministers, including the home minister, and some ruling AL leaders have been speaking, it really surprised people. They have been claiming that people rejected the opposition's 'illogical' hartals and that people's lives were normal. Bangladesh Television (BTV), despite being run with public money, has been nakedly abused by the government to spread the lies in its news reports on hartals. BTV is spending a lot of time and labour to defend the ministers and AL leaders' claims about hartals. Do people believe the BTV's news reports? Do people believe what the ministers and AL leaders are saying about hartals? Do the ministers and AL leaders really believe what they are saying? If they do not believe what they are saying, then why are they asking people to believe in them?

It is however clear that the ministers and AL leaders who have been desperately trying to hide the facts, by making the claim that the opposition's hartals were rejected by people, are not taking the political crisis seriously. It means that they will not take any step soon to overcome the crisis. This means that they will make more blunders in the coming days when the opposition parties will start enforcing more agitation programmes against the government. In their final year, all the successive governments since 1991 have failed to keep the situation under control. They resorted to brute force to suppress the opposition parties which always boomeranged for them. And all prevailing signs suggest the current AL-led government will not be an exception, it will go down the path of its predecessors. And principal Mozammel and millions of others' prophecy might be proven right.

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