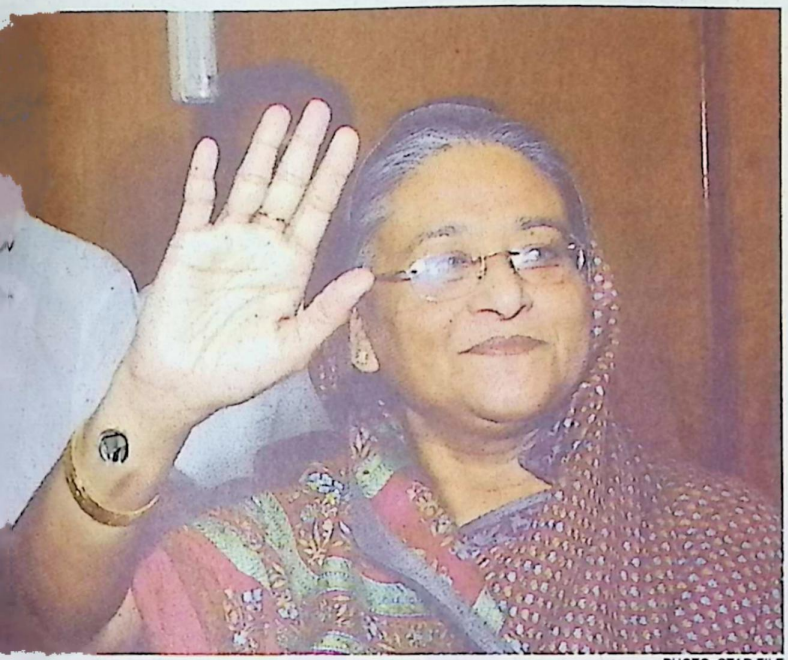


PHOTO: STAR FILE

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina - in no mood for compromise.

A volatile political situation always favours the opposition parties, not the government and the ruling party.

engaging themselves in a fight with the BNP-led opposition alliance on the streets in the name of resisting the opposition's ongoing movement. This strategy to counter the opposition alliance will finally benefit the latter as the situation will become even more volatile. And a volatile political situation always favours the opposition parties, not the government and the ruling party.

The government policymakers and the ruling party leaders have also been making another blunder of mixing up the issue of the trial of war criminals with other political issues. They have been using it as a shield, which is quite dangerous. Holding trial of war criminals is not the AL's pet project. It is a demand of the people. And unfortunately, the excessive use of the shield has already done much damage to the issue. So, the government policymakers and the ruling AL leaders should immediately reassess this strategy to keep the trial free from further political controversy.

The government's strategy has made it clear to the main opposition BNP that the latter's demand for reintroduction of the election time non-partisan caretaker government will not be accepted by the government. And if a caretaker government is not installed, the BNP's chances to win the next parliamentary polls stand very slim. There is no other alternative to the BNP, but to launch a movement for an election time non-partisan government to return to power. Therefore, the BNP in March announced the one-point movement to topple the government as a means to meet its demand.

The one-point movement will not be automatically accepted. For this, the BNP feels it has to stage violent street agitations, something similar to what the AL did in 1996 and at the end of 2006 and in early 2007. Enforcing gentle and peaceful political agitation programmes will not yield the results desired, the party high command might think. So it needs to gear up militant street agitations to make the situation more volatile. And for the violent agitations, BNP needs Jamaat and Shibir who have unleashed mayhem in parts of the country for some days since February 28. So, the BNP has minimised its gap with Jamaat and decided to enforce all agitation programmes jointly under the banner of the 18-party alliance. The political strategy is clear. BNP needs Jamaat to wage vigorous street agitations against the AL-led government while Jamaat needs BNP's banner to unleash terror to destabilise the situation to foil the trial of war criminals and to get Jamaat's top leaders freed. Therefore, their goal is the same--ousting the government. And some BNP policymakers have also acknowledged that only the ouster of the government will fulfil all the parties' demands.

The BNP has planned to make the April a turning point for its one-point movement to overthrow the government by enforcing more frequent hartals and road blockade. They even may announce the 'march towards Dhaka' programme, urging its leaders and workers to come to the capital and agitate in the city to bring the capital to a standstill. All the opposition's programmes will be aimed at cre-