



Tarique spoke via video; court ban exists

STAR REPORT
BNP Senior Vice-Chairman Tarique Rahman, now in London, spoke at the party council through video conference yesterday afternoon.
However, The Daily Star refrains from publishing his statement as the High Court imposed a ban on running his statement by print, electronic and social media as long as he remains a fugitive.
The court on March 7 last year issued the order in response to a writ petition, filed by Supreme Court lawyer Nashreen Siddiqua Lina.
At that time Tarique had been making derogative remarks about



BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia along with other top leaders clapping during the rendering of the party song, "Prothom Bangladesh Amar Sesh Bangladesh", at the inaugural ceremony of sixth national council at Engineers Institute, Bangladesh (IEB) yesterday. Right, crowd outside the institute and the audience inside.



PHOTO: STAR

BNP for new govt model

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parliamentary democracy from the presidential form of government in 1991 through constitutional amendment, which reintroduced the current provisions that give the PM a sweeping authority.
She spoke against such absolute powers for the first time yesterday.
BICAMERAL PARLIAMENT?
Speaking at the council, the BNP chief pledged to introduce a bicameral parliament, maintaining the unitary nature of the country, and restore the referendum system in the charter.
There will be an upper house of parliament with representatives from different communities, marginal groups, knowledgeable and gifted people from different professions, said Khaleda.
Under the constitution, all powers belong to the people, she said in defence of referendum. "But the present government has abolished the provision from the constitution. We will reintroduce this provision of referendum introduced by Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman and restore the democratic rights of the people."
Any changes in the balance of power between the PM and the president, the introduction of an upper chamber of the House and restoration of the referendum system will require an amendment to the constitution. To amend the charter, two-thirds majority is needed in parliament.
In the council, the BNP chief did not

announce the name of a new secretary general or any member of the national executive committee of the party. The councillors vested their power in Khaleda to elect the secretary general and all members and officials of the national executive committee.
After the death of Khandker Delwar Hossain in 2011, Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir was made acting secretary general.
Several councillors criticised the party high-ups for doing little during the anti-government movement last year, and urged Khaleda not to give any post to those who "betrayed" the party.
VISION 2030
In her address at the Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh, the BNP chief unveiled her party's Vision-2030 plan "to turn the country into a higher middle income nation" if voted to power.
She said her party wanted to combine 3Cs -- good policies, good governance and good government.
Khaleda promised stern action against militancy and corruption, and said the post of an Ombudsman would be introduced to ensure administrative transparency and accountability.
Her second term in office between 2001 and 2006 was marked by widespread corruption and alleged patronisation of militants.
Khaleda also spoke of decentralisation. "A massive devolution of power in all strata of government will be ensured. Duties and responsibilities of the local

government institutions will be identified to ensure good governance."
In addition, the party will ensure transparency in appointing constitutional post holders by introducing a public hearing system, she said.
She opened her speech by recalling the outstanding contributions of the country's great leaders -- Sher-e-Bangla AK Fazlul Huq, Hussein Shaheed Suhrawardy, Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani and Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.
"They all made our great War of Liberation successful through a long struggle."
She also thanked India and other friendly countries and people who extended their support during the 1971 war.
Mentioning that the council is being held at a very critical juncture, she said, "We'll have to show the light to remove this darkness from the national life through this council session."
Explaining the theme of her Vision-2030, Khaleda said, "Providing space for all shades of opinion and beliefs, we want to nurture and strengthen a political culture which will create a vibrant pluralistic Bangladeshi society. Bangladesh will become a rainbow nation through unity and diversity."
Bangladesh will become a modern democratic and higher middle income country with a per-capita income reaching around \$ 4,000 to 5,000 by 2030,

she said.
"For this purpose, the BNP will take creative and well thought-out policies and measures to reach a double-digit growth rate."
'ENGAGE IN DIALOGUE'
Khaleda also promised to revoke all "blacklaws".
Insisting that the BNP will not allow any terrorist and separatist activities inside Bangladesh against any other country, Khaleda said the party would work with the international community to contain terrorism and militancy.
She said her party would introduce a positive, creative and forward-looking politics, coming out of the current politics of vengeance, confrontation and annihilation.
The young generation will have to take the leadership as many of the existing leaders may not be in the position for long, she said. "What kind of a country and society are we leaving behind for them?"
Touching upon the holding of an inclusive and fair election, Khaleda said political parties could surely find a way through talks.
"That's why I once again urge the government to engage in dialogue in this regard," she said, adding that not only the BNP but also almost all political parties in Bangladesh wanted a democratic and representative government.
"For this, a fair, peaceful and inclusive election is necessary as soon as possible."

She called upon the people to unite to get back their rights that have been "snatched by the government."
FULL TRUST
Khaleda inaugurated her party's sixth national council amid a festive atmosphere by hoisting the national flag at 10:48am.
She also released a bunch of balloons and pigeons.
Around 3,000 councillors, 8,000 delegates and thousands of party leaders and activists from home and abroad gathered at the venue.
Leaders of different political parties and business and professional bodies, some foreign diplomats and intellectuals attended the inaugural ceremony.
However, no representative from the ruling Awami League was present unlike in the previous council in 2009.
At the beginning of the election process for the standing committee members and members and officials of the executive committee, senior BNP leader Khandaker Mosharrar Hossain told the councillors that it would not be realistic to start the election process, as it would take long to complete.
"Besides, you have already said that you have full trust in Begum Khaleda Zia in all matters. I would therefore urge you to raise your both hands if you support the proposal to give her the responsibility to elect members of the standing committee and other office bearers in the executive committee," Mosharrar said.

The councillors then said yes by raising their hands.
Khaleda later said she would do the "serious and huge task" after a huge homework.
MORE POWER FOR KHALEDA, TARIQUE
The second session of the council amended the party charter, giving Khaleda and her son Tarique Rahman ever more power.
Following the amendment, all front and associate bodies of the party must have Khaleda's approval, unlike in the past. She can also reorganise any scrapped committee, subject to approval by the next council.
In addition, the new party charter allows holding of only one post, but Khaleda can bypass this provision to give anyone more than one post.
As for Tarique, he will now enjoy the power to carry out the "whole range of party activities" in the absence of the party chief. He can also continue to hold the post of the party chief, in the party chairperson's absence, until the next council.
Referring to the \$101 million cyber heist from the Bangladesh Bank reserves, Khaleda told this session: "We have proof that the money has been stolen and some big fishes were behind this. But the media could not write it."
She alleged that BB governor Atiur Rahman was made the scapegoat, and that is why he cried at the press conference.

Navy to get two subs this year

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development, she said her previous government, after returning to power in 2009, formulated the Forces Goal 2030.
Besides, 18 state-of-the-art warships, including frigate, corvette and patrol vessel, as well as survey vessels and fleet tanker and container vessels have already been inducted into the Navy fleet, the premier mentioned.
Maritime helicopters and maritime patrol aircrafts have also been added to the Navy during the tenures of the government, Hasina said, adding that two more corvettes are being built in China to strengthen the Navy's capability.
"The responsibility to utilise huge maritime resources for the economic uplift of a developing country like Bangladesh is bestowed upon the Navy."
Considering the strategic and geographical location of the country, the role of Bangladesh Navy is immense in protecting its water boundary and resources, the PM noted.
Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Maritime University has been set up with the cooperation of Bangladesh Navy to further strengthen the position of the force as well as to continue leading role in maintaining world peace, she added.
Hasina mentioned that the construction work of Bangabandhu Complex is progressing fast at the Naval Academy to ensure modern and world standard



Three new warships at the Naval Berth of Bangladesh Naval Academy in Chittagong. PHOTO: STAR

training.
Later, she boarded the newly commissioned warships and witnessed a joint exercise of various warships of the Navy.
Ministers, the PM's defence adviser, parliament members, chiefs of the three

services, diplomats and high civil and military officials were present.
Earlier, the premier handed over the commissioning order to the commanding officers of BNS Samudra Abhijan, built in the USA, and BNS Prottoy and

BNS Swadhinata, built in China.
On her arrival at the BNS Base Isha Khan, the PM was received by Chief of Naval Staff Vice Admiral Nizamuddin Ahmed and Rear Admiral M Akhtar Habib, Navy commander in Chittagong.

62 killed

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southern Russian city of Rostov-on-Don, was reportedly making its second attempt to land at 0050 GMT after circling for several hours.
It missed the runway and erupted in a huge fireball as it crashed, leaving debris scattered across a wide area.
"My whole house shook. I looked out into the yard and the sky was all red -- it was a shade of red that I have never seen," eyewitness Yana, who lives near the airport, told AFP.
Russia's Investigative Committee confirmed that all 55 passengers and seven crew members on board were killed.
It launched a probe into whether technical problems, pilot error, poor weather or a combination of problems were behind the crash.
Flydubai chairman Ghaith al-Ghaith expressed "devastation" over the disaster and sought to head off any "speculation" that the crash was the result of terrorism.
"We do not yet know all the details of the incident but we are working closely with the authorities to establish precisely what happened," Ghaith said in statement.
A no-frills budget carrier which is a sister firm to Emirates Airlines, flydubai is government-owned and was set up in March 2008.
The passengers on board flight FZ981, which took off from Dubai at 1820 GMT Friday and had been due to land at 2240 GMT, included 44 Russian nationals, eight Ukrainians, two Indians and one Uzbek, the airline said. They comprised 33 women, 18 men and four children.
The company said the Cypriot pilot and Spanish co-pilot each had nearly 6,000 hours of flying experience.
The five other crew members were from Spain, Russia, the Seychelles, Colombia and Kyrgyzstan.
'SUCH A LOSS'
Inside the international terminal at Rostov-on-Don airport, local residents laid flowers in front of a list of the victims, as shocked relatives tried to digest the news.
"I turned on the news and for some reason thought it was a terrorist attack but it turned out to have been here right at the airport," said bereaved relative Alexander Chistyakov.
"My brother was fifteen years older than me. He was a successful surgeon in

the local hospital. It is such a loss."
Footage aired on local media showed a huge fireball engulfing a wide area after the plane came down. The authorities took more than an hour to get the blaze under control, the emergencies ministry said.
State media later showed pictures of rescue workers combing through scattered debris in the driving snow, with the emergencies ministry saying over 850 rescuers and 170 vehicles had been deployed.
Investigators said the plane's two blackboxes had been recovered.
The plane had "skimmed the ground and broke into several pieces", according to the investigators, with fragments of the Boeing 737 reportedly scattered up to 1.5 kilometres from the crash site.
A strong wind warning was in place and it was raining hard at the time of the crash.
Russian President Vladimir Putin expressed his condolences to the families of the victims after being briefed on the crash by his transport and emergency situations ministers, the Kremlin said.
The head of Russia's aviation agency said there was no doubt about the safety of the runway or facilities at Rostov-on-Don and brushed off any blame directed at the air traffic controllers.
"In accordance with international flight rules the captain of the aircraft takes the decision to land," Alexander Neradko was quoted as saying by Russian agencies.
Flights were diverted to Krasnodar airport, 300 kilometres south of Rostov-on-Don, with officials saying the airport would stay closed until at least Monday.
STRONG AIRLINE RECORD
Following the crash, a criminal investigation was opened to determine whether any safety regulations were violated and if negligence played any part in the disaster.
"Different versions for what happened are being worked through, among them a mistake made by the crew of the plane, a technical problem onboard, difficult weather conditions and other factors," Investigative Committee spokesman Vladimir Markin said in a statement.
Aircraft manufacturer Boeing said in a statement that it "stands ready to provide technical assistance upon the request of government agencies conducting the investigation."

Kohli does it again

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to 18 overs a side because of rain.
Kohli (55 not out) and Yuvraj combined caution and aggression to blunt the Pakistan bowling attack, which seemed to miss left-arm spinner Imad Wasim, who made way for Mohammad Sami.
Sami did make an impression by sending back Shikhar Dhawan and Suresh Raina in his opening over to be on hat-trick but Pakistan's four-pronged pace attack had no answers to Kohli's batting.
Yuvraj (24) fell to Wahab Riaz, but Kohli, who was joined by captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni for the finale, was in cruise control as his 37-ball knock was laced by seven boundaries

and a six.
Dhoni (13 not out) swiftly joined the party as he hit a six to level the scores and then hit the winning runs in front of a raucous crowd.
Earlier, Ahmed Shehzad and Shoaib Malik played useful cameos to guide Pakistan to 118 for five, a score which looked competitive on a tricky surface.
Put in to bat on a moisture-laden pitch that saw heavy rains through the day, Pakistan opens Sharjeel Khan (17) and Shehzad (25) played cautiously at first and then lost their wickets as they tried to accelerate.
Indian spinners Ravichandran Ashwin and Suresh Raina looked dangerous in their opening spells on a

track that provided turn and bounce, but the Pakistan batsmen did well to show patience.
Fresh from his match-winning exploits against Bangladesh, skipper Shahid Afridi (8) promoted himself to number three but the boom was missing from his shots this time around.
The hard-hitting batsman could only find a single boundary in his scratchy 14-ball stay as he walked back amid loud cheers from the capacity crowd.
Umar Akmal and Shoaib Malik then stitched together a crucial 41-run stand that helped Pakistan put up what seemed a respectable score.
Akmal (22), whose 16-ball knock

was studied with a boundary and a six, was caught behind off Ravindra Jadeja's left-arm spin.
Innings top-scorer Malik (26), who hit three boundaries and a six in his 26-run innings, soon joined Akmal in the dug-out after trying to force Ashish Nehra's pace.
Wicketkeeper-batsman Sarfraz Ahmed and Mohammad Hafeez finished off the innings as Pakistan got seven off the last over.
But Pakistan's efforts were negated by Kohli who deservedly got the man of the match award.
India next play Bangladesh in Bangalore on Wednesday, while Pakistan head to Mohali to meet New Zealand on Tuesday.