

BNP Hints At Return To Parliament

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BNP has been abstaining from parliament for 66 consecutive days. It briefly joined the maiden session before walking out amid a dispute over seat arrangements. It has maintained a non-stop boycott since.

To a question on BNP's demand for one more front-row seat in parliament, Farrouque said: "The speaker has assured us of considering the matter. We hope he will live up to word."

He alleged that a trial court sent summons to opposition leader Khaleda Zia's Dhaka cantonment residence at 3:30am on Jan 26 in connection with Zia Orphanage Trust corruption case. Sending summons to a former prime minister at the dead of night is discourteous, he said.

The opposition chief whip said sending summons "is an attempt to create obstacles to the opposition's return."

He accused the government of pursuing the strategy of persecuting the opposition party. "They are withdrawing all the political cases filed against them, but none filed against opposition party leaders. Moreover new cases are being filed against the opposition leaders."

The BNP leader termed deaths of BM Bakir and Amirul Islam Minto, two pro-BNP trade union and cultural leaders, in jails mysterious and demanded 'neutral probe' into the deaths.

The opposition had initially demanded one front-row seat for rejoining parliament. Later it set 10 conditions, which include scrapping the decision to cancel lease of Khaleda Zia's cantonment house, strengthening her security, withdrawing 'politically motivated' cases against Khaleda, her son and senior vice-chairman Tarique Rahman and other leaders, and making BNP legislators head of two more standing committees.

Source: bdnews24.com