

Parties condemn attack on Menon

By Staff Correspondent

Different political parties and organisations yesterday condemned the attack on Workers Party General Secretary Rashed Khan Menon, who was shot and seriously injured by unknown assailants.

A UNB report says: Awami League presidium member and Deputy Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Abdus Samad Azad strongly condemned the dastardly gun attack on Workers Party leader Rashed Khan Menon.

The nation, under no circumstances, will tolerate such a heinous attack," he said in a statement last night.

Azad said the armed attack on Menon, a prominent parliamentarian, once again proved how far the law and order had deteriorated in the country.

Ganatantri Party leader Suranjit Sengupta, MP, censured the attack on Workers Party leader Rashed Khan Menon and said the government will have to bear all the responsibility.

"Menon has been made a target both within and without the government for his leading role in and outside Parliament against terrorism," he said in a statement.

Sengupta said the cowardly attack on Menon was a glaring example of planned attempt on the opposition leaders. People of this country, under the leadership of democratic forces, will definitely give appropriate answer to this, he added.

Our Staff Correspondent picks up: The Five-Party Alliance leaders accused the 'killers' circle, defeated in the country's Liberation War of 1971, of shooting at and severely injuring Menon.

The Alliance leaders observed that the shooting aimed at killing Menon, was follow-up act of the conspiracy to kill pro-liberation political leaders after the killing of the CPB leader Ratan Sen.

The Five-Party said that the government must take responsibility for the incident as it had not taken any action against the Jamaat-Freedom Party-Juba Command group which, it alleged, was killing people publicly.

The incident proves government failure in maintaining law and order," they added. The alliance has called a public meeting in front of the GPO today (Tuesday) at 5 pm to protest the incident.

Convener of the Ekattorer Ghatok Dalal Nirmul Samannye Committee Jahanara Imam vehemently condemned the attack on Workers Party General Secretary, Five-Party and Samannye Committee leader Rashed Khan Menon.

"I have no words to condemn such heinous attack," Imam told The Daily Star over telephone while expressing her reaction.

She said that had repeatedly urged the Home Ministry as well as the government to ensure security to the Samannye Committee leaders. The government did not pay heed to it.

The assassination attempt on an MP indicates to the law and order situation in the country," she said adding that "if the government fails, the people will take action against the anti-liberation forces."

She prayed for Menon and wished his early recovery.

The Dhaka metropolitan city branch of the Patriotic Democratic Front (PDF) in a statement condemned the attempt on Menon, MP.

The PDF city convener Nomi Gopal Saha, in the statement, held those who had publicly named national leaders to be killed responsible for the incident. The PDF also demanded punishment to the assailants.

The National Awami Party

(NAP) President Prof Mozaffar Ahmed and General Secretary Pankaj Bhattacharya in a statement expressed their deep pain and anger over the firing on Rashed Khan Menon.

The NAP leaders said that such an act of terrorism that had occurred publicly was part of a blueprint.

The attack on Menon was made following the government failure and reluctance to deal with the self-confessed terrorists and the communal and fascist forces, they added.

Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) President Saifuddin Ahmed Manik and General Secretary Nurul Islam Nahid condemned the attack on Workers Party General Secretary.

In a joint statement Monday, CPB leaders said that the lives of political leaders had become insecure because of attacks by "the killers".

They expressed concern over the "pre-planned attacks" on the democratic and progressive political leaders and workers.

The CPB leaders also re-resented the government's tacit sponsoring of terrorist forces.

They demanded arrest and punishment to those involved in the incident.

The Awami League backed Chhatra League (BCL) demanded resignation of Prime Minister Khaleda Zia and her government following the attack on Rashed Khan Menon.

The BCL leaders in a protest rally held in front of the Jatiya Press Club yesterday said that the government had sheltered the Jamaat-Shibir, Freedom Party killers who fired on Menon.

The rally was addressed by BCL General Secretary Iqbalur Rahim, Organising Secretary Mahbulul Huq Shakil, DU unit GS Pankaj Nath and Dhaka (North) President Safiqul Alam.

Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal (BSD) convener Khalequz-zaman in a statement condemning the attack on Rashed Khan Menon said that Menon's assassinations belonged to the Jamaat-Shibir-Juba Command circle, that killed CPB leader Ratan Sen recently.

He demanded resignation of the Home Minister blaming him of failing to ensure security to public life.

Acting President of Jatiya Party Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury, MP, condemned the armed attack on Rashed Khan Menon.

This incident speaks of the deteriorating law and order situation and indicates that nobody in the country is safe from the armed hooligans," he said in a statement.

The former Prime Minister urged the government to find out the culprits and take them to task.

Mizan Chowdhury also called on the government to arrange for proper treatment to Menon.

In a separate statement, JP Whip in Parliament Monirul Huq Chowdhury also condemned the incident and said it is the proof of alarming law and order situation in the country.

"Nobody's life and property are safe under the present government," he said.

The JP leader demanded exemplary punishment to the culprits.

BSS adds: Matur Rahman Nizam, MP and leader of the Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami parliamentary party, expressed concern at the shooting at Workers Party General Secretary Rashed Khan Menon, MP.

In a statement, he demanded of the government to find out the persons responsible for the attack and give them exemplary punishment.

Khaleda visits Menon

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia last night visited Rashed Khan Menon, MP, at the Combined Military Hospital where he was undergoing treatment after being shot at near his party office by unidentified gunmen, reports BSS.

The Prime Minister went to the operation theatre and enquired about Menon's condition from the attending physicians and asked them to arrange all possible treatment.

The Prime Minister stayed at the hospital for half an hour and spoke to Menon's relatives. She condemned the attack.

She gave the directive to call the country's best surgeons immediately for the treatment of Menon.

Attending doctors said Menon's condition was improving.

Speaker Sheikh Razzak Ali, Foreign Minister Mostafizur Rahman, Home Minister Abdul Matin Chowdhury, Information Minister Nazmul Huda, Labour and Manpower Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, State Minister for Religious Affairs Prof MA Mannan, among others, accompanied the Prime Minister.



Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia coming out of CMH after visiting Menon last night. — Star photo

We're no longer safe: Hasina

By Staff Correspondent

Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina Monday condemned "the dastardly attack" on Workers Party General Secretary Rashed Khan Menon.

Giving her immediate reaction to newsmen after coming out of the Combined Military Hospital (CMH) where she went to visit, Hasina said, "We are no longer safe."

"I find no words to convey my resentment against such action," Hasina told the newsmen.

She described the prevailing situation "worse than what was during the autocratic regime" and said that the government had failed in ensuring security to the people as well as the political leaders.

"We are not sure what the ruling party is doing about the law and order situation of the country."

"If such things continue, maybe all of us will have to die," she added.

Hasina left the hospital at 11:35 pm.

Attack on Menon triggers violence

By Staff Correspondent

Violence erupted out different areas of the city after unidentified assailants shot Workers' Party leader Rashed Khan Menon Monday night. Mobs exploded crackers,

pelleted stones and damaged dozens of vehicles plying on the roads at different areas of the city, including Dhaka University, Purana Paltan, Gulistan and High Court areas.

2 Shibir activists hurt in blast

BOGRA, Aug 17: Two activists of Islami Chhatra Shibir were seriously injured when a cocktail blasted at a hostel of Bogra Azizul Haq Government College at Malgram area of the town today, reports UNB.

Pintu and Doel, both studying in the same college, were admitted to a local clinic where the condition of Pintu was stated to be critical.

Witnesses said the explosion took place when the victims were reportedly engaged in making cocktails in the hostel.

Leaders through CMH to visit Menon

By Staff Correspondent

They all converged for couple of hours and the Combined Military Hospital in Dhaka became a meeting place for people of diverse political beliefs.

But there was one thing which was common among some scores of leaders of different political parties: care for the health of Rashed Khan Menon and anxiety over security to the political leaders of the country.

They were in small groups dotting the manicured garden in front of the CMH. A relatively large crowd thronged the entrance of the hospital, eager to know the latest condition of the leader.

Some were sitting around the fountains. And everyone was whispering. It was 11 in the night.

"Things are going worse now a days... only that day it was Ratan Sen and today it is Menon," said one leader of Communist Party of Bangladesh.

Leaders of different political parties began arriving at the hospital after Menon was shifted there from the Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Some rushed there after listening to the television news bulletin at 10-30 pm. Besides, the political leaders, there were journalists, artists, lawyers and businessmen.

The tension eased when it was announced that the condition of Menon was improving and the doctors had nearly completed the operation.

Menon had to be given more than 12 bags of blood.

JCD sweeps BAUCSU elections

By DU Correspondent

The Jatiyatadabi Chhatra Dal (JCD) swept the Bangladesh Agricultural University Central Students Union (BAUCSU) elections held Sunday.

Saiduzzaman Kamal and Shahadat Hossain have been elected Vice President and General Secretary of BAUCSU respectively.

The results of the election to BAUCSU and nine hall students' unions for the session 1990-91 were announced by its election commissioner on Sunday, a BAU press release said yesterday.

Other elected office-bearers of BAUCSU are: Joint Secretary — Zahangir Alam Khan, Sports Secretary — Mahbubur Rahman Mukul, Assistant Sports Secretary — Syed Ahmed Khan, Magazine Secretary — Helal Uddin Helal, Literary Secretary — AYM Quayum Pradhan, Cultural Secretary — KHIF Arif, Common Room Secretary — Hassan Zafir Tuhin, Girl's Common Room Secretary — Nargis Akhter Banu and Social Welfare Secretary — Shamimuz-zaman Firoz.

The elected members are: Shah Zaman Khan Tuhin, Mizanul Karim Liton, AHMR Karim Hasu, Abul Khair Dipu, SMA Khalid and Rafiqul Islam Manik.

Meanwhile, the Ganatantrik Chhatra Oikya (GCO) condemned the holding of the BAUCSU polls yesterday.

The GCO leaders in a statement yesterday alleged that the university authority supported the ruling party's students' organisation to have control over the BAUCSU leadership.

The authorities had violated the electoral code of conduct by providing students the opportunity to cast votes without identity cards, the GCO leaders said in the statement.

Resenting the authorities' 'open partiality' the GCO leaders demanded cancellation of the polls and to hold it again in a democratic atmosphere.

They also urged the teachers, students and all employees of the university to go for a united movement against the BNP-backed students' organisation.

MCL shares

From Page 1 Col 8

MCL amounted to Taka 27 lakhs while the total value of the shares of the unit stood at Taka 25.5 lakhs on face value.

BSEC sources said that bid was much below the government expectations and that the government had expected at least a Taka 50-lakh bid.

The government's rethinking to float a fresh bid is substantiated by the fact that MCL had a huge inventory of Taka 5.04 crore as on February, 1992.

The bank overdraft of the unit on the same date stood at Taka 6.27 crore. Of officials observed that the amount in overdraft after adjustment with the inventory would be "very nominal".

The MCL had an accumulated loss of Taka 6.48 crore as on February, 1992. At the same time, it contributed Taka 23.95 crore to the national exchequer as revenue.

The Midnight File

People's Party MP arrested in Sindh

KARACHI (Pakistan), Aug 17: A Sindh province deputy of opposition leader Benazir Bhutto's People's Party (PPP) was arrested today, police sources said. They said Pir Mazharul Haq, a member of the provincial parliament, was arrested at Karachi airport on arrival from Baluchistan province. Government officials said Haq, a former Provincial Minister, was wanted on several charges, including kidnappings and extortion of money. Haq denies the charges, reports Reuter.

UN team finds information about missile programme

UNITED NATIONS, Aug 17: A UN weapons team which has just finished inspecting a number of facilities in Iraq found significant new information about the country's ballistic missile programmes, a spokesman said today. The 22-member team did not visit any Iraqi government ministries because it had not needed to do so this time, he added.

The spokesman for the UN special commission in charge of scrapping Iraq weapons of mass destruction, Tim Trevan, said the weapons team "found significant additional information concerning the ballistic missiles programmes", reports Reuter.

Republican Party Bangladesh-Japan convention opens

HOUSTON, Aug 17: Amid a stream of bleak polls and a simmering crisis with Iraq, the US Republican Party opened its convention today, a four-day meeting that will send George Bush on the road to a second term or into political oblivion, reports Reuter.

The 2,210 delegates from the party that traces its roots to Abraham Lincoln were called to order inside a massive red, white and blue festooned sports arena where Bush will formally accept the nomination on Thursday night.

Analysts agreed Bush could still stop the free fall that has put him far behind Democrat Bill Clinton — provided he starts right now to convince voters he is a "born again" new Bush: full of fight, brimming with ideas, ready to stage a miracle rally beyond anything seen in modern US politics.

The opening minutes of the convention were all Texas-style — Bush's adopted home state.

Mexican-born restaurant owner Ninfa Lorenzo, who owns one of Bush's favourite eating spots in Houston, led the assembly in the pledge of allegiance to the American flag.

The convention unfolded on a soaring podium with a star-sprinkled blue background from which Fred McClure, a black who is Bush's assistant for congressional affairs, sang the national anthem in a resounding bass voice.

Bush: Kurds Barapukuria

From Page 1 Col 7

British Prime Minister John Major, who was interrupting his holidays to return here late Monday to chair a special cabinet meeting on Tuesday, was said by the sources to be ready to back the use of force if necessary to impose the UN's will over weapons inspections.

RAF Jaguars are stationed in Turkey, where they were deployed to enforce the safe havens initiative for Kurds in northern Iraq, and a huge British base on Cyprus is capable of handling bombers.

The Royal Navy's three-vested armilla patrol is also in the region, where the type 42 destroyer HMS Edinburgh is currently involved in a training exercise with the Kuwaitis.

Iraq's official press today vilified Bush as a "war-maniac" and published a call from the Defence Minister urging the armed forces to be alert to foil enemy schemes.

The newspapers made no mention of US reports that United Nations weapons experts would provoke a fresh standoff with Baghdad over inspections of government ministries.

"One label is not enough to describe murderers like you," the government newspaper Al-Jumhuriyah said in its latest diatribe against Bush. "Your savagery has no limits. You are mean... despicable... and repugnant."

UN arms inspectors in Iraq completed their mission today and are due to leave on Tuesday.

A Cairo report adds: A US military strike on Iraq could destabilise the Middle East and would not necessarily weaken Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, Arab analysts said.

One diplomat said there was a growing Arab view that a more effective way of neutralising Iraq would be to dismember it by encouraging the Kurdish north and the Shi'ite Muslim south to split from the Sunni Muslim centre around Baghdad.

Another envoy commented, "I don't think it is serious because there is no need to do this." The danger is that a US strike against Iraq could release a surge of anti-Western feeling in the Arab world, complicating Arab-Israeli peace talks and undermining governments from Egypt to Morocco which face challenges from Muslim fundamentalists.

Fundamentalist Hezb chief Gulbuddin Hekmatyar vowed on Sunday to besiege Kabul until all his demands were met. [Related story on Page 6]

Menon shot

From Page 1 Col 3

Menon, one passed through while the other remained implanted and was being removed.

Sekander Ali, a leader of the Ganatantrik Chhatra Union, said he heard shots as he and others were discussing some political issues with Menon, who came to his office in the afternoon after attending a meeting of the Five-Party Alliance at Segunbagicha.

President Abdur Rahman Biswas, Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina and leaders and work-

ers of different political parties and organisations rushed to the hospital.

Other leaders who thronged the hospital included Speaker Sheikh Razzak Ali, Home Minister Abdul Matin Chowdhury, Foreign Minister Mostafizur Rahman, Information Minister Nazmul Huda, Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury and Maudud Ahmed of Jatiya Party, Dr Kamal Hossain, Mohiuddin Ahmed and Abdur Razzak, Tofael Ahmed of Awami League, Shajahan Siraj, ASM Abdur Rab, Saifuddin Ahmed Manik and Nirmal Sen.

Indo-Pak talks

From Page 1 Col 7

countries when Britain's colony in India was partitioned along religious lines in 1947. A war in 1948 left the territory split by a cease-fire line.

Any new conflict over Kashmir could involve nuclear weapons, which both countries are believed to possess.

The way for discussion came in a letter from Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to Indian leader PV Narasimha Rao agreeing to bilateral talks, but not conceding any points of substance.

"Even though we may be diametrically opposed on certain issues, we have to sit down and try and find a way out. It may take time," said Pakistan's Foreign Secretary Shahryar Khan, who delivered the letter.

Khan later met his counterpart, JN Dixit, to begin the sixth round of talks in the last 18 months on easing border tension. For the first time, the talks addressed the Kashmir question.

They will continue until Wednesday. Both sides expressed satisfaction with the opening day.

"There were very serious, meaningful discussions today," said Indian government spokesman Aftab Seth.

The discussions were meant to prepare the groundwork for a summit between Rao and Sharif later this year at a meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement in Jakarta, Indonesia.

The clash was contained after army commanders contacted each other on a "hot line" that was set up in an earlier round of talks.

Huda: Wage Board

From Page 1 Col 7

newspapers which had published in to the editorials of the capital-based newspapers. This meant that advertisements were distributed to some newspapers which did not have a real existence, he observed.

Barrister Huda said the Department of Films and Publications was virtually the meeting ground of the advertisement collectors and receivers and there had been no definite system of the distribution of the advertisement. Massive corruption, was resorted to in the distribution of advertisements, he opined.

The Information Minister outlined the steps already taken by the present government to stop mismanagement forthwith in this respect and consequently discipline was being restored in the distribution system of newspaper advertisement. It has become necessary to clear huge arrear advertisement bills on one hand and to see to it that the size of it does not go beyond limit on the other. This is being done mainly for financial limitation, he said.

The Information Minister said payment of arrear bills on advertisement of over Taka seven crore in place of Taka five crore allocated in the current fiscal's budget and also payment of advertisement bills during the current fiscal would be near impossible unless the advertisement distribution system was substantially improved.

For this reason, he said, unauthorised insertions have