

Why this patricide?

By Morshed A Khan and Masud Arif

The narrow lanes of the old city's Becharam Dewri area lead to the modest two storied house of Shaker Ahmed Shaheen, 28, the son who hacked his sleeping father to death with a kitchen 'boti' last week.

On the wooden door of the house, an old signboard reads SS Trading Co. with which nobody claimed any link. On the ground floor, a few shops facing the cramped street were still kept open. The shopkeepers looked anxiously at the passersby. The atmosphere gave a ghostly feeling.

"Shaheen lived there," said a young man of the area pointing his finger upstairs. "He was not a bad person," the young man disappeared into the winding lanes after uttering the words.

A faint light came out of the small windows upstairs. Shadows of people moving inside fell on the old-fashioned grills and pale wooden panes.

A two-foot staircase led to a typical common verandah where a few grim-faced people waited. At one corner, some women were sitting with hands on cheeks casting blank look.

"You see, today in the Qulkhwan. The whole family is too shocked to talk," said a smartly dressed relative of Shaheen with a 'pager' hanging from his waist belt.

"It was probably a sudden outburst of a prolonged frustration," a maternal cousin went on saying with a sigh. "Otherwise how could a sound person come back home in the morning, pick up a 'boti' and kill a helpless 65-year-old sleeping man," he said.

Another cousin, seemingly of a rich background, said that after the killing, Shaheen did not try to run away. "He was as cool as a rock. He came out of the room and locked himself in the toilet," he said.

"When the police came and asked him if he knew what would be the consequences of the killing, Shaheen simply replied in the affirmative and said, 'They would hang me, what else,' the cousin added.

A neighbour and a close friend of the family disclosed that Shaheen had spent the night with a cousin. On return home he did the mad act. However the visiting relative

could not confirm the statement.

Shaheen's mother, Saleha Khatun became paralysed five years ago following a heart stroke. She could hardly talk. With the prevailing situation in the family, the relatives feared that she would not survive long. One of his brothers, Mintoo has been suffering from acute skin disease. Nobody dared offer him any job. He is living in virtual quarantine in a separate accommodation.

Both his sisters were living with their husbands and children.

Shaheen's father, an unemployed elderly man, managed the family with the meagre income from the shop rents downstairs. The house belonged to the mother and was still in her name. She had inherited it from her parents.

Over the years, Shaheen had tried hard to earn a living, according to neighbours. Most recently, he was doing 'dish antenna' business with one of his cousins.

Shaheen, fourth among two sisters and three brothers grew up in the congested part of the metropolis where sports or other recreational facilities are hardly available for the young people.

At school, a neighbour said, Shaheen did not show much enthusiasm in learning. He could not cross secondary level.

But the 'boy' was polite and soft-spoken, one said. "As reported in some newspapers, he was not at all a nuisance as regards girls," said a shopkeeper nearby who knew him.

Psychiatrists observe that patricide is a rare phenomenon in our country. In this particular case the relationship between the father and the son must have gone wrong somewhere.

"Apparently, with the available information, it seems the father-son relationship has been strained," said Dr. Hedayet Ullah, an eminent psychiatrist. "The delusion in the son's mind reached a paranoid position when the outburst happened," he said.

Shaheen gave a confessional statement in the court a day after the gruesome killing. The court sent him to the Dhaka central jail where Shaheen awaits trial for patricide.

Proper monitoring of budget stressed

Speakers at a discussion yesterday underlined the need for proper monitoring of the national budget to ensure positive changes in the market and also to protect rights of the consumers, reports UNB.

The discussion on 'This Year's Budget and Consumers' right' was organised at the Jatiya Press Club by the Consumers' Association of Bangladesh (CAB).

Gano Forum President Dr Kamal Hossain, Awami League leader Begum Matia Chowdhury, former Finance Ministers Dr Fasihuddin Mahtab and M Syeduzzaman, Chief Editor of The Financial Express Reazuddin Ahmed, NASCIB vice-president Maleka Khan and Director General of NGO Affairs Bureau Abdul Mannan participated in the discussion.

Journalist Birupakha Pal presented the key-note paper at the discussion, chaired by CAB President Borhan Ahmed.

Dr Kamal Hossain said consensus is a must to prepare a national development programme.

He suggested that government should also be formed in Bangladesh through consensus like South Africa to give a boost to the development activities.

The Gano Forum President said that a strong partisan government cannot ensure qualitative changes of the economy and establish rule of law in society to maintain peace and harmony.

Referring to more than two crore unemployed people, he said this year's budget did not mention them. Employment opportunities will not be created without investment, he said and warned that "More unemployment will breed terrorism."

Awami League leader Begum Matia Chowdhury criticised the government for placing the budget without the Opposition in Parliament and said that the budget is not pro-poor.

She said the BNP government is always trumpeting its achievement but "did not give any justified answer to the people about fertiliser crisis, load shedding and money laundering by a few defaulters during this regime."

Dr Fasihuddin Mahtab stressed on enhancing remunerative employment to improve the commonman's purchasing power, which is a prerequisite for any sort of development.

Referring to declining or stagnant trend in the agricultural production, he emphasized on more investment in research and extension services to develop the sector.

M Syeduzzaman, said party politics got privilege in this year's budget. "If it continues, then it will not bring any welfare to the people. Situation goes against anti-tax holiday but the government has extended its probably for the pressure of a lobby."

Referring to the increasing trend of enhancing indirect tax which is now on an average 84 per cent, he said this will go against the poor people. Only 20 per cent people of the society will get the benefit of tax rebate, he added.

Abdul Mannan said some two crore people of 40 lakh families below poverty line are involved with the development activities of the NGOs. About 10 lakh people, he added, are entering the consumer market through increasing their purchasing capacity with the help of the NGOs.



Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat (R) and Israeli Foreign Minister Simon Peres walking out at dawn yesterday after an 8.5-hour meeting in Erez. The two men broke up a whole night of talks admitting they had failed to strike a deal to extend autonomy. — AFP/UNB photo (Story on page 8).

PLO-Israel deal at White House in mid-July

GAZA CITY, July 2: The signing of a Israeli-PLO accord on expanding Palestinian self-rule will take place at the White House, a senior Palestinian official said Sunday, reports AP.

US officials have sent invitations to Israeli and Palestinian leaders to sign their accord in Washington in mid-July, said the official, speaking on condition of anonymity.

"If we overcome the remaining obstacles in the near future, then we will be able to sign in a ceremony in Washington," the official said.

Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and PLO chief Yasser Arafat met for more than eight hours late Saturday and early Sunday, trying to agree on an Israeli troop pull-back in the West Bank and Palestinian elections.

The two failed, but were to meet again within the next two days. Israeli negotiators said Sunday they were optimistic that an agreement would be signed soon.

Meanwhile, Israel will release 1,500 Palestinian prisoners as soon as it reaches agreement with the PLO on a West Bank troop withdrawal, the Voice of Palestine radio reported Sunday.

Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres made the pledge to PLO chief Yasser Arafat when the two met earlier Sunday in an attempt to hammer out an accord on deadline, the radio said, citing Palestinian officials.

Mason falls from 4th floor, dies

By Staff Correspondent

A mason died after falling from the fourth floor of an underconstruction building at Paribagh in the city yesterday.

Abdul Malek Bepari, 35, who was seriously wounded, died while being taken to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital by local people.

The Midnight File

Seven hurt in Lima blast

LIMA, July 2: At least seven people were wounded when a car packed with 100 kilos (220 pounds) of explosives blew up outside the home of a prominent legislator, police said today. The seven injured included one of Victor Joy Way's daughters and two police officers who were guarding the home of the ruling party lawmaker in the residential area of La Molina, reports AFP.

Bid to hijack Ethiopian plane

SANAA, July 2: Yemeni authorities today foiled an attempted hijacking of an Ethiopian plane from Sanaa International Airport only minutes before take-off. The Ethiopian hijacker brought a bomb on board but security services discovered the explosive just minutes before the plane took off for Addis Ababa, an official spokesman said, reports AFP.

Major rivers mark rise Flood engulfs fresh areas in Sherpur

SHERPUR, July 2: Fresh areas in Jhenagati thana were submerged today as several parts of the Kalipura embankment washed away by the rain-swollen Moharashi and Shomeshari rivers, reports UNB.

Officials said three dwelling houses were damaged and a vast track of land in Kalinagar, Dhanshi, Dariapar and Matiya villages went under water rendering hundreds of people homeless.

Gazani Tourist Centre protection embankment was also damaged by the swirling water.

Deputy Commissioner of the district Ataur Rahman said Nalpara, Sadar, Hati-banda, Dhanshai, Gouripur thanas were badly affected by the rampaging flood.

All major rivers marked rise in the 24 hours as the moon is 'very active' all over the country.

All the rivers in the south-eastern hill basin rose sharply during the period till 9 am yesterday, a Flood Information Centre bulletin said.

According to the bulletin, the Brahmaputra recorded rise at upstream points while the Ganges and the rivers in Meghna basin marked both rise and fall.

However, all the rivers are flowing below danger level.

In the south-eastern hill basin, the Halda registered sharp rise by 2.1 metre at Narayan Hat but was flowing 29 cm below danger level.

The Matamuhuri registered sharp rise by 2.32 metres at Lama and 2 metre at Chiringa. The Feni at Ramgarh also rose sharply by 1.35 metre.

'96 polls: Clinton, Powell to run neck and neck

NEW YORK, July 2: President Clinton and former US military chief Colin Powell would be in a dead heat in a head-to-head presidential election, a Time magazine-CNN poll found, reports AP.

Assuming he runs for the Republican Party, Powell, the former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, was favoured over Clinton 41 per cent to 44 per cent in the poll of 1,000 people conducted June 21, 22. Others said they weren't sure or wouldn't vote.

2 die in Natore road accident

From Our Correspondent

NATORE, July 2: Two persons were killed and three others injured in a road accident in Natore today.

Police and eyewitnesses said, a Bogra-bound truck from Chittagong hit and crushed a rickshaw from behind seriously injuring the rickshawpuller Ibrahim, 60, and a pedestrian Abdul Hamid, 45. They were taken to the Natore hospital where doctors declared them dead.

The helper of the truck has been arrested but the drive has fled.

Partial strike

From Page 1

Strike was observed peacefully at some of the mills in Dhaka, Narayanganj, Chittagong, Ghorashal, Narshingdi, Bhairab and Rajbari according to reports received in Dhaka. The strike call was totally ignored at mills in Khulna industrial belt.

However, leaders of the workers unions in a statement yesterday claimed that strike was observed at "most of the jute-textile mills throughout the country."

The leaders also strongly protested the statements by the Bangladesh Jute Mills Association and the Bangladesh Textile Mills Association which claimed that private sector workers were getting equal facilities with those in the public sector.

Signatories to the statement included Abul Bashar, Shah Alam, MA Aziz, Lutfar Rahman, Iqbal Majumder, Shahidullah Chowdhury, SM Rumi, Anwar Begum, Badrul Alam Khan Lavlu, ZM Quamrul Anam and K Alam Belal.

Consumers

From Page 1

amendments now being examined by a Cabinet sub-committee.

Some other similar laws Essential Commodities Control Act of 1956, the lodised Salt Act of 1989, the Anti-hoarding Act and the Sale of Goods Act still exist officially, but not in practice.

The government's plan was to enact a fresh comprehensive law incorporating all provisions needed to protect the interests of the consumers.

Egypt, Sudan

From Page 1

agency SUNA he met separately with the Ambassadors of Britain, China, France and Russia here.

Atabani said he asked them to "exercise their international responsibilities to halt Egyptian aggressions of all forms against Sudan."

On Saturday Sudan made a complaint to the UN Security Council accusing Egypt of attacking Sudanese troops in the disputed Halaib region on the Red Sea and asked the United Nations to intervene.



Commerce and Information Minister M Shamsul Islam and visiting President of the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting Dr Ali Larijani signed an agreement on exchange of information between the two countries at the State Guest House Meghna in the city yesterday. — PID photo

Accord with Iran

From Page 1

The signing of the agreement was preceded by an official talks between the two countries, covering bilateral matters as well as regional and international issues of common concern.

The Information and Commerce Minister led an 11-member home team at the talks which lasted for an hour.

The President of Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting led his country's 6-member delegation.

Half-day hartal in Jhenidah today

From Our Correspondent

JHENIDAH, July 2: A half-day hartal has been called here tomorrow to press the demand for the release of the President of the District Contractors' Association. The 'Gano Nirjatan Pratirodh Committee,' which gave the hartal call termed the arrest of Mizanur Rahman Bablu as on a repressive measure.

Editor: Mahfuz Anam

Printed & Published by A. S. Mahmud, Managing Director, on behalf of Mediaworld Ltd, 52, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000, from City Publishing House Ltd, 90 Kakrai, Dhaka-1000. Editorial, News & Commercial Offices: House No: 11, Road No: 3, Dhanmandi R/A, Dhaka-1205. PABX: 500092-4, Commercial: 500091 (Direct), Fax No: 88-02-863035, GPO Box No: 3257, Cable: DAILYSTAR, DHAKA.

Tk 1591 cr LCs to import rice opened in '94-95

By Staff Correspondent

The authorities of the Islamic Degree College here today banned student politics on the campus for indefinite period, a college press release said tonight, reports BSS.

The decision was taken to avert further incident on the college campus.

On June 28 last two persons including a student were killed in a gun battle between two rival factions of the Bangladesh Chhatra League on the campus.

The authorities also banned functioning of ad-hoc committee of the students' union and meeting and posting on the campus.

No outsider will be allowed to enter the college campus without prior permission.

LCs were also opened to import 212 thousand tonnes sugar worth Tk 268.31 crore, 30,000 tonnes and 45,000 cartons milk powder worth Tk 195.92 crore and 25,000 tonnes pulses worth Tk 34.23 crore.

Traders also opened LCs to import 1200 thousand tonnes fertiliser worth Tk 388.86 crore, 2426 thousand tonnes cement worth Tk 556.98 crore and 318 thousand tonnes BP sheet worth Tk 451.75 crore.

JCD activists block Dhaka-Aricha road for 2 hours

By JU Correspondent

The Jahangirnagar University (JU) unit of the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) put up barricades on the Dhaka-Aricha highway for two hours from 11 am yesterday demanding the trial of Dipu's killers.

Dipu, an activists of the JU Chhatradal unit, was killed by his rivals in the party in November, last year.

They also brought out processions on the campus and on the highway.

At a rally near the dairy firm, JCD leaders urged the authorities to arrest the persons involved in the killing.

Rickshawpuller beaten to death

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, July 2: A rickshawpuller was beaten to death by its passengers at Lamabazar point area of the town this afternoon.

The incident took place following an altercation between the rickshawpuller and passengers. At a stage, the passengers swooped on the rickshawpuller Madhu Mia, 30 and beat him severely causing his instant death.

The victim hailed from Gaibandha district.

Cellular phones, pagers banned

Nine more killed in Karachi violence

KARACHI, July 2: At least nine people were killed Sunday as paramilitary troops fought armed youths in a poor suburb where residents were forced indoors and police checkpoints could not contain the violence, reports AP.

In a desperate bid to control ethnic fighting in this city of 12 million, the government on Sunday outlawed cellular telephones, pay phones and pagers in Karachi, claiming militants were using them to coordinate attacks.

Police said up to 200 armed militants and about 1,000 paramilitary soldiers were fighting into the evening in Orangi Town, a district filled with factory workers and poor labourers. Shops remained closed and police checkpoints were set up at all routes in and out of the area.

Militants armed with everything from hand pistols to rocket-propelled grenade launchers, dug trenches to hold back the armoured personnel carriers used by the paramilitary Rangers.

"Anyone found carrying a weapon will be shot on sight," said Maj. Gen. Mohammed Mustaq who was directing operations in Orangi Town.

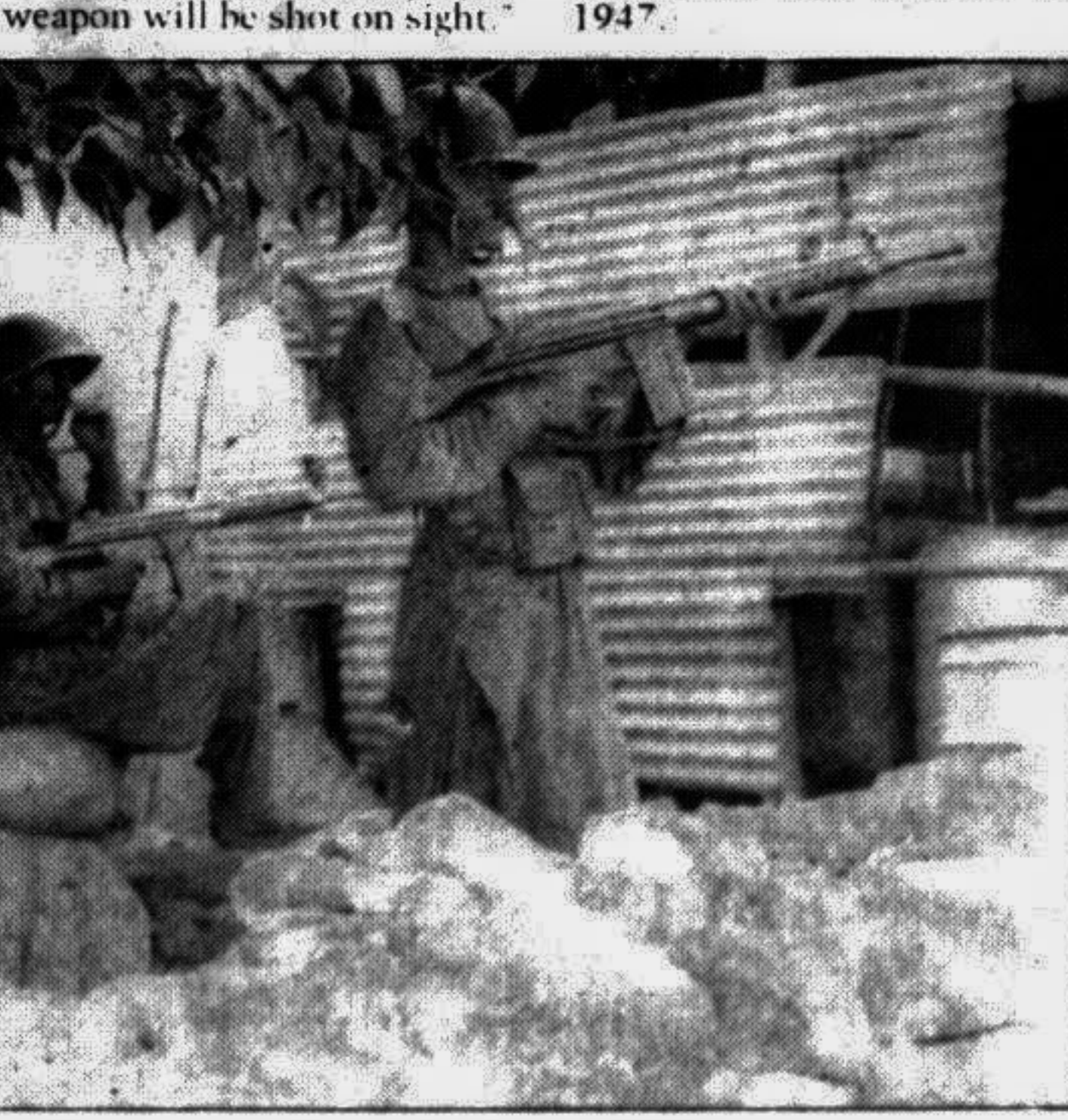
A policeman and a member of the paramilitary Rangers were among the dead. The number of injured was not known, police said. Eleven people were arrested, police said.

Gunfire and random violence was reported in several parts of Karachi.

The latest killings raised the death toll for this year's surge of violence to 958. In June alone, 334 people were killed.

Most of the killing has been blamed on the dominant faction of the Mohajir Qaumi Movement, which has used violence and called business strikes to paralyze the city and undermine Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's government.

The powerful opposition group has been demanding more jobs, education and political clout of the Mohajirs, or Muslims who migrated to Pakistan from India when the Asian subcontinent was divided into two nations in 1947.



An elderly man watches as paramilitary rangers cordon off the Orangi township in the city's western part, where security forces and militants were fighting pitched battles yesterday in Karachi. The troops faced stiff resistance during an operation against the militants. — AFP/UNB photo