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Bangladesh yet to open a mission in Vienna

By M Anwarul Haq

Bangladesh has failed to open a mission in Austrian capital Vienna, an international diplomatic hub, even two years after it intended to do so. Dhaka's plan to open a mission in Vienna came for consideration early last year, six months after the Austrian government in an unique gesture expressed its desire to provide free accommodation for Bangladesh embassy, sources concerned said.

Initially, the government took up a scheme to open three resident missions last year in the capitals of Jordan, the Maldives and Austria. While full-fledged missions were opened in Amman and Male, the plan to open an embassy in Austria is learnt to have been sent to cold storage.

In the new missions, two serving generals were sent on deputation to act as the first resident envoys. They are Major General Harun Ahmed Chowdhury sent as High Commissioner to the Maldives and Major General Arsa Amin as Ambassador to Jordan. The proposed mission in Vienna was intended to be at ambassadorial level.

Vienna's importance as a diplomatic hub is internationally acknowledged. After New York and Geneva, Vienna houses the headquarters of several important UN and international agencies. The UN Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO), UN Social Issues Secretariat and International Atomic Energy

Bomb blast kills 6 in Khulna mosque

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Oct 8: Six persons were killed and about 40 injured, 14 of them critically, in a powerful bomb explosion during Jumma prayers at the Ahmadiya Muslim Jamaat Khana (Kadiani mosque) in Nirala residential area here today.

The dead have been identified as Jahangir 25, Nooruddin 28, Dr MA Mazed 54, Mohibullah 38, Sobhan 40 and Akbar, 35. Jahangir and Nooruddin died on the spot when the bomb exploded just beside the imam, blowing up the walls and windows and cracking the roof of the semi-pucca mosque where about 200 people were offering their prayers at about 1-45 pm, police and witnesses said. The imam, Imdadur Rahman, was also critically injured.

Four others — Dr. M A

Mazed, Mohibullah, Sobhan and Akbar — died at the Khulna Medical College Hospital.

The powerful explosion rocked the entire area and created panic among the residents. Eleven of the injured were admitted to KMCH, three to Khulna Sadar Hospital and the rest to different clinics in the city.

Hands and legs of the victims were seen strewn on the floor of the mosque on pools of blood, witnesses and police said.

The KMCH and the Sadar hospital were crowded with wailing relatives of the victims.

Police have collected some splinters of the bomb and cordoned the entire mosque area. Police believe the bomb was planted there earlier.

An Army team of explosive experts is expected to arrive

here tonight from Jessore to ascertain the type of the bomb.

A grenade explosion at the Udichi musical concert at Jessore on December 6 last year killed JSD leader Kazi Aref and several others.

After the incident, police searched the office of Ward Commissioner Asaduzzaman Ltu, which is very close to the mosque, police said.

UNB adds: Nine of the injured admitted to Khulna Medical College Hospital were identified as Siddiqur Rahman, 50, Montaz, 50, Omar Farooq, 48, Abdur Razzak, 30, Chanchal, 23, Wadud, 30, Enamul, 40 Akbar, 35, Ahsan, 30 and Imam of the mosque Emdadur Rahman.

The three admitted to the Sadar Hospital were identified as Md Mridha, 48, Mansoor, 27 and Ali Akbar, 35.

Explosives recovered from Mirpur mosque, Janakantha office

Star Report

Explosives wrapped in an aluminium foil fitted with "suspected" timing or remote control devices were recovered from a mosque at Mirpur in the city after Jumma prayers yesterday and a briefcase containing a similar device was found abandoned at the Daily Janakantha office in the afternoon.

Army experts and police are examining the explosives and mechanism of exploding those till late last night.

The authorities ordered an investigation into the incidents.

A box containing sweets at Mirpur-Section-2, offered for

distribution among the Muslims shortly after the prayers, led police to suspect whether it had any link with the bomb blast at an Ahmadiya mosque in Khulna that killed six people and wounded 40.

It, however, could not be confirmed if the explosives carried remote control or timing device, army experts told The Daily Star last night.

Government officials, when contacted, could not say whether the incidents were linked with each other.

"It will not be appropriate to make any comment before investigation into the incidents," said Home Secretary Shaifur Rahman. The government has

already formed a high powered committee to investigate the Khulna incident. But the two incidents in the city will be investigated by police, he added.

Before the Jumma prayers started at Masjidul Ferdous at around 1 pm, some unidentified persons requested some Muslims to pass forward three packets of 'sweets' to the front rows.

After the prayers, the staff of the mosque looked for those who gave the packets. As none responded, the staff decided to distribute the sweets among the Muslims.

Sweets were found in two of the boxes and the other contained the explosives, police



Secretaries general of BNP, Jatiya Party, Jamaat-e-Islami and Islami Oikya Jote and members of the liaison committee of the Four-Party Alliance met Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Khaleda Zia last night at her Minto Road official residence.

AL 'frustrated' No more talks offer unless Opposition changes its stance

By Reaz Ahmad

Awami League yesterday condemned, what it dubbed 'the negative attitude of the Leader of the Opposition and BNP chief Khaleda Zia' and resolved not to give any more dialogue offer unless the latter changed its current stance of one-point demand.

The 67-strong AL Central Working Committee (ALCWC) while holding a crucial meeting at the Prime Minister's official residence, Gonaabhaban, last night, expressed a deep sense of frustration at Khaleda Zia's continuous refusal to offers for dialogue by Sheikh Hasina, participants at the meeting said.

After pronouncing the final expulsion order of the ALCWC member Kader Siddiqi, the meeting also had a heated debate over who would be the party nominee for the by-poll in the Tangail-8 seat of the Jatiya Sangsad vacated by Siddiqi, party sources told The Star on conditions of anonymity.

The two-hour long ALCWC meeting, chaired by Sheikh Hasina, expelled Siddiqi under article 46 (Ka) (Uma) and (Chha) of the party constitution for violating party disciplines and 'his activists' against the party interest, said a party press release late last night. It may be mentioned that at an earlier meeting Siddiqi was served with a notice of temporary expulsion asking the latter to show cause as to why he would not be expelled for good.

Yesterday, he was stripped off his position as a primary member and ALCWC member. While a section of party central leaders wanted the party chief to offer Tangail AL leader Shahkhat Momen Shahjahan

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Top alliance leaders meet Khaleda, discuss one-pt movement

By Staff Correspondent

In a major political development, secretaries general of four component parties of the opposition alliance in a lengthy meeting with BNP Chief Khaleda Zia yesterday reviewed their "one-point government movement" and "decided to further consolidate the alliance".

Members of Liaison Committee of the four-party combine also attended the meeting. The four top leaders of BNP, Jatiya Party, Jamaat-e-Islami and Islami Oikya Jote mainly spoke at the meeting, sources said last night.

The one and a half hours' meeting ended at about 9 pm. Emerging from the meeting, BNP leaders Anwar Zahid and M Shamsul Islam MP told waiting newsmen that the main objective of the meeting was to in-

tensify the on-going one-point movement and further consolidate unity of the alliance. The four alliance leaders will meet soon to work out modalities for this, Zahid said.

"It is needed to further consolidate unity of the alliance as we have completed our issue based agitation and have now launched the one-point movement. The on-going movement has already reached its peak."

Zahid said top leaders at the meeting expressed their determination to make the one-point movement a "complete success" by ousting the Awami League government within the shortest possible time to facilitate holding of national elections ahead of schedule.

Replying to a question, he said, "Definitely this meeting is

a step towards the proposed meeting of chiefs of the four parties. There must be a meeting of the chiefs at a stage of the movement."

Zahid said Leader of the Opposition in parliament Khaleda Zia expressed her satisfaction over the meeting and hoped that this would definitely consolidate the unity of the alliance and expedite the one-point movement.

She assured senior leaders of the parties that she would do everything possible to maintain the unity.

The alliance, formed on January 6 at the initiative of Khaleda Zia, is firmly rooted now in the hearts of the people. She is handling the alliance very carefully, Zahid added.

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Pilferage of goods in Ctg port Tk 12 cr compensation claims unsettled

From Nurul Alam

CHITTAGONG, Oct 8: Pilferage and looting of imported goods from Chittagong port jetties forgoing to claim compensation of about Tk 12 crore from the port authorities, sources concerned said.

The claims, however, still remain unsettled. The compensation was claimed by the importers in 83 cases of pilferage and looting recorded during more than two and a half years.

Twenty-six claims of Tk 5.60 crore were made in 1997, 34 claims of Tk 4.24 crore in 1998 and 23 claims of Tk 1.88 crore from January to September this year, the sources said.

The cases of pilferage and looting of goods from jetty area might exceed the number recorded as many importers did not claim compensation, some other sources pointed out.

In the middle of last year,

raw silk worth Tk 1.20 crore was looted from a container. The importer claimed compensation it was not settled as yet, port source said.

A senior port official, requesting not to be named, said that a high level committee would be formed shortly to re-investigate the pilferage of one container of goods.

Some top security officials of the port might be involved in the incident, he said.

Port authorities evaded settlement of earlier claims showing 'limitation of liability of it for seven days'.

According to working rules of Chittagong port, if any cargo is found damaged, destroyed or pilfered within seven days after unloading from ship, claim of compensation is settled, but not otherwise.

In the face of pressure from

Ershad Shikdar confesses killing four people

KHULNA, Oct 8: Notorious terrorist Ershad Shikdar today confessed for the first time to have killed four people in Jessore in last three years, reports UNB.

Police said he has been charged with five murders in the neighbouring district. He named four of his victims during grilling by an interrogation team, they added.

The interrogation started at 2 pm Thursday after he was taken on a 33-day remand to Sonadanga thana on Wednesday.

"Shikdar yielded to the pressure at about 11 am as he was shown all evidence and paper clips and told about the names of those working for him," said DC (South) Mazharul Haque at around 4:30 pm while briefing newsmen during a break in 28 hours of marathon questioning.

He divulged names of four slain in Jessore in last three years, the DC said. "But the

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Interview
Curtly Ambrose embodies the class and grace of a rare breed of genuine fast bowlers. The West Indies pace spearhead talks with Raheed Imam.
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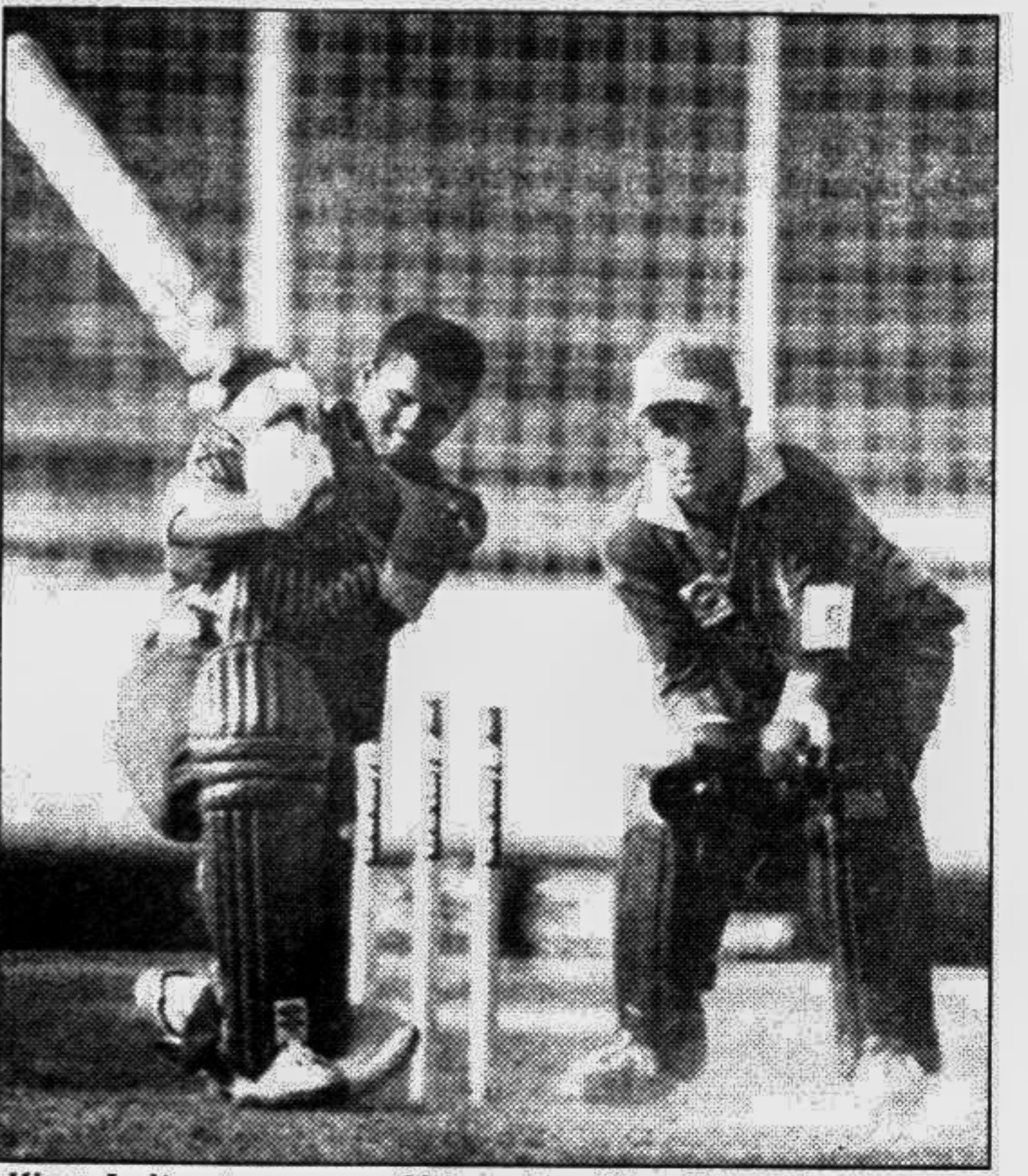
Prayer Timings

October 9		
Asan	Jamaat	
Fajr 4:30	5:00	
Zohr 12:45	1:20	
Asr 4:15	4:30	
Maghrib 5:50	5:55	
Esha 7:45	8:15	

Source: Islamic Foundation

Tigers save wickets but match

By Al-Amin



West Indies top-scorer Shivnarine Chanderpaul executes an exquisite off-drive yesterday. He hammered 92 not out off 109 balls. — Star photo

West Indies: 292/6 Bangladesh: 219/5
'Consistency' is a word that does not seem to exist in the dictionary of our cricketers. They played commendably against the visiting West Indies in the three-day match, but returned against the same side with an inexplicably feeble exhibition in the first match of the Biman Millennium Cup one-day series at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

West Indies won the match very comfortably, defeating the consistently inconsistent hosts by 73 runs.

There was little to cheer about for the expectant holiday crowd at the big bowl except for the two unbeaten half-centuries by Al-Shahriar and Khaled Masood.

West Indies, batting first after winning the toss, piled up a monumental score of 292 for six in the stipulated 50 overs.

In reply, to their credit, chasing a towering target Bangladesh had five wickets in hand with the score on 219 at the end of the match.

Al-Shahriar, back in the national fold after a long break, scored an unbeaten 62. The ever-agile Masood, who also scored half a ton in the three-day match, put on 53 in the unbroken record sixth wicket stand of 123 runs with Al-Shahriar.

Although the West Indies skipper Brian Lara, who opened the innings, was cheaply dismissed, Bangladesh surprisingly were not inspired by the early success. The Caribbean run-machine and arguably the best batsman in the world got himself out in the very second over amidst thunderous applause in the terraces.

Instead Bangladesh produced an erratic display of bowling and some bizarre fielding, allowing the West Indies to recover from a jumpy start (29/2) to pile on a huge total.

To add to their misery the butter-fingered fielders dropped four easiest of dolly catches, much to the horror of the boisterous supportive crowd.

The amazing exhibition of dropping regulation 'high school' catches was started by none other than skipper Aminul Islam. He let off Wavell Hinds at cover while the left-

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Today's match
The second one-dayer between Bangladesh and West Indies starts at Bangabandhu National Stadium at 2 pm today.

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ডিপার্টমেন্টাল স্টোজ
কনফারেন্স হল
ফাস্ট ফুড
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- ▶ মাস্খুজাগে বিল্ডিংকটিং গ্যার
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