

Sohel murder in Khulna Mayor group condemns filing of case against BNP leader Martuza

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

The mayor-loyalist group of Khulna City BNP has sharply reacted to the implication of its senior vice-president Shaharuzzaman Martuza in the murder of Jubo Dal leader Sohel.

Eight persons including Martuza have been named as accused in the murder case. Sohel was gunned down at 10:30am on Saturday at Kailaghat under Khulna Thana.

Leaders of both city and district convening committees of the party said the real culprits have been not been accused in the case for politically victimising a senior leader of the party with whom Sohel had no political or personal connection whatsoever.

They have sought intervention of central leaders to urgently deal with

the matter for safeguarding the party from those who incite dangerous intra-party rivalry.

According to party insiders, Jubo Dal leader KI Zaman Sohel was a professional extortionist and a suspect in the murder of celebrated communist leader comrade Ratan Sen recorded with Khulna Thana.

Comrade Sen was brutally stabbed to death at 8:30am on July 31, 1992 near the office of the police superintendent.

Sohel was allegedly involved in several murders that were not recorded as regular cases due to his political influence and threats given to relatives of victims, said party insiders while strongly condemning filing of the case terming it as false and motivated.

According to Rupsha Thana police, Sohel was arrested last Friday night on charge of kidnap-

ping a shrimp trader for realising toll. But police was forced by an MP to release him the same night. Sohel was also wanted in connection with the case of rape of a widow at Shingherchar. After the case was recorded with Rupsha Thana, Sohel gave death threat to the widow for filing the case, said a senior sub-inspector.

Martuza said that despite being neighbours, he never gave shelter to Sohel because he was professional criminal, adding that Sohel had joined hands with some people within the party only to destroy his political career.

Martuza's rival Manju has remained tight-lipped regarding inclusion of Martuza's name in FIR.

Meanwhile, Special team have been formed to arrest the accused in Sohel murder case.



PHOTO: STAR

Rajuk runs a demolition drive at Segunbagicha in the city yesterday.

No headway in Almaty

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Shan foothills on the edge of Almaty, told Musharraf he sought a solution to end the confrontation once and for all.

Vajpayee said earlier he was ready to talk to Pakistan over Kashmir, long a flashpoint for tensions between the two rivals, but only if cross-border incursions were stopped.

"We have repeatedly said that we are willing to discuss all issues with Pakistan, including Jammu and Kashmir, but for that, cross-border terrorism has to end," he told the summit opening.

And, Musharraf pledged Pakistan would not attack first.

"We do not want war. We will not initiate war. But if war is imposed on us, we will defend ourselves with the utmost resolution and determination," he told leaders.

"The people of South Asia continue to pay a heavy price for the refusal of India to resolve the Kashmir dispute in accordance with the relevant UN resolutions and the wishes of the Kashmiri people," Musharraf said.

Speaking at the start of his meeting with Musharraf, Putin said he hoped "not only to smooth over a conflict that has gathered force of late, but to escape from confrontation altogether".

"Recently, the world community has followed the events on the Indian Pakistan border with especial alarm. My colleagues -- I have had many recent meetings at the summit with the EU, the Russia-NATO summit -- my colleagues have asked me to pass their concern on to you," Putin said.

US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld is set to visit India and Pakistan within the next few days.

Musharraf acknowledged that high tension along Pakistan's border with India had stirred "deep fears in South Asia and around the world over the real possibility of conflict".

Indirectly denying Pakistan was supporting Muslim insurgents operating in India-controlled Kashmir, Musharraf said: "Pakistan will not allow its territory to be used for any terrorist acts outside or inside its boundaries."

But he added: "Similarly we cannot condone for any reason the rapacious policies of certain states that forcibly occupy territories or deny freedom to peoples for decades on and, with total disdain for ... decisions of the United Nations."

Vajpayee said: "It (terrorism) has emerged as the greatest adversary of peace, security, democracy and multi-confessional societies in Asia and the whole world."

India saw little change in

Pakistan's position. Foreign ministry spokeswoman Nirupama Rao said there was "very little in the speech to suggest there is the vision thing... it would seem that Pakistan is travelling down the same potholed road".

In Barbados, US Secretary of State Colin Powell said on Monday he was pleased India and Pakistan recognised the "horrible" dangers of nuclear weapons, and insisted Washington would maintain diplomatic pressure to keep them from war.

"It would be absolutely horrible in the year 2002 for any nation to use nuclear weapons," Powell told reporters during a meeting of the Organisation of American States.

Meanwhile, Pakistani and Indian forces shelled each other yesterday, as fighting intensified along their borders where a million troops from both countries are poised for war.

Witnesses said the shells fell into open fields and deserted houses in the bordering villages.

Water share

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has not only been adequate but also "really satisfactory."

During the last five months, two meetings of the Joint Committee (JC) were held in Dhaka and Kolkata after the committee members visited the measurement sites at Hardinge bridge, Farraka feeder canal, Farakka navigational lock and at Farakka. The members were satisfied with the measurement technicalities in place and the recorded flow as per the 30-year Ganges water sharing treaty, the sources said.

The Joint Committee was set up invoking a clause of the Indo-Bangladesh water sharing treaty. Bangladesh however faced an acute shortage of water in 1997 and some shortage last year.

Although Dhaka wants a review of some provisions of the treaty, experts are yet to identify those.

The 30-year treaty signed in Delhi in 1996 provides for its review after every five years if either of the sides wants. The first five-year period ended on December 12 last year.

Officials of the foreign ministry and the water resources ministry were not very clear in their comments when asked whether they would invoke the review provision while the country got its due share of water.

A senior official of the foreign ministry recently said, "The status of the agreement and the situation on the ground is being reviewed. We will make our review proposal after the study is completed."

7 held while ransacking house at Sirajganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sirajganj

Police arrested seven people while they were ransacking the house of late Awami League leader Abdul Karim, at BA College Road in the town in the early hours of yesterday.

They are Rafique, 28, Matin, 30, Mamun, 28, Kamal, 27, Saiful Alam, 29, Rashid, 26, and Saiful Islam, 28.

Sources said a gang of seven led by Mamun entered the house at about 1 am and started ransacking it.

On information, police rushed to the spot and nabbed the seven with arms.

Police said the incident was a sequel to a dispute over a piece of land between the widow of Abdul Karim and Mamun's father Abdur Rashid, at village Natun Bhangabari in Sadar upazila.

A case was lodged with Sirajganj Sadar police station in this connection.

In another drive, sadar Thana police arrested two Jubo Dal activists -- Abu Taleb and Firoz -- from Sayagobinda area under Section 54.

Environment Day

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guests. It will be chaired by Environment and Forest Minister Shajahan Siraj.

Various organisations have chalked out elaborate programmes to observe the day. Forum of Environment Journalists of Bangladesh (FEJB) will organise a discussion on "Environment of Dhaka City" at Bangladesh-China Friendship Convention Centre at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar today.

Communications Minister Barrister Nazmul Huda will be the chief guest on the occasion.

A cultural function and folk songs on the environment will be presented at the centre today.

Ubimg, a local NGO, will hold a discussion on "Preservation of biodiversity" at the Friendship Centre at 10 am on June 6. State Minister for Agriculture Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir will attend the discussion as chief guest.

A discussion on "International Mountain Year" will be held at the same venue on June 6. Deputy Minister for CHT Affairs Moni Swapan Dewan will attend the function as the chief guest.

On June 7, a discussion on "World Summit on Sustainable Development and Bangladesh Perspective" will be held at the Friendship Convention Centre. Shajahan Siraj will attend the function as the chief guest.

TV coverage

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Bangali daily was not issued accreditation card to cover the budget session. Sources claimed that several by-line reports of the reporter on irregularities in the parliament secretariat might have angered the authorities and so he was excluded from the list.

BDR 'excess'

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ministry on Monday. The authorities have decided to investigate the 'excesses' and custodial death of the young fish trader, the sources said.

It is for the first time that BDR has been deployed to assist the civil authorities to maintain law and order.

AL impasse

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tries to ensure transparency.

"That amendment opened up avenues for non-minister opposition lawmakers to head different parliamentary committees provided the Treasury Bench and the Opposition Bench reach a consensus," he added.

On the other hand, ruling party sources said that before bargaining for the posts of chairman of the committees, the opposition should come up with the names of their lawmakers, stating whom they wish to get in which committee.

Miners keep off work

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inside," the official explained.

Meanwhile, the Chinese developer of the project CMEC has taken initiatives to pay compensations to the families of the two dead labourers and to the injured workers.

The Barapukuria mining authorities said a compensatory financial package was being fixed in consultation with the local chairman and the families of victims.

The bodies of the two workers -- Kamruzzaman (Zaman) and Nirmal Mandi were handed over to their families after autopsy at the Dinajpur Hospital. The bodies were buried yesterday evening.

Kamruzzaman, son of Kafuiddin of Purba Sherpur village, and Nirmal, son of Luxmiram Mandi of Ramchandrapur village, -- both under Parbatpur Police Station -- died when part of the mine's roof collapsed on them.

Kamruzzaman and Nirmal were in charge of pumping water out of the mine. Water is the constant threat to the mine.

They were working 430 metres deep in a pond-like rocky swamp along with seven others. The seven workers who were assisting Kamruzzaman and Nirmal in pumping water remained stuck for half an

hour until a rescue mission freed them. The nearest shaft was seven minutes away on foot.

A solid stone roof over a ton in weight and about nine square feet in size crashed down on the two workers, the high official said. The location is much below the subsoil layer of coals and is used as a water retention point.

The mine has eight kilometres of tunnels and 100 labourers work in each of three round-the-clock shifts.

Following the disaster, the mining authorities informed the Parbatpur Police Station and handed over the bodies of the two workers to the police at around 8.30pm Monday.

The US\$192 million Barapukuria coalmine project had been plagued with problems for several years after mining started off back in the mid-1990s. These difficulties arose from the unforeseen subsoil water reservoir, making the mine unstable and unworkable.

But now, the mining has reached a comparatively stable condition. It has extracted about 600 tonnes of coal. It is now producing 24 tonnes of coal a day and the authorities are expecting to increase the production to 3,300 tonnes by the year-end and

go for commercial production.

In 1998, the coalmine project came to a halt when water suddenly gushed out of a hidden water reservoir, flooding the mine over 300 metres in depth.

After a lot of efforts, the Chinese developer of the project overcame the initial crisis and went ahead with mining. Once again in late 1999, disaster visited on the coalmine, as the water of several unforeseen reservoirs flooded the whole mine.

Progress of the mine construction remained suspended for over two years. The Chinese developer late last year in a press statement claimed that all problems were taken care of.

The coalmine project will mainly be utilised for production of 250megawatt power. The coalmine was designed to produce one million tonnes of coal a year, 85 per cent of which will be consumed by the power plant.

The mine is projected to have two billion tonnes of high quality coal, which is on thermal value equivalent to 60 trillion cubic feet gas.

ROK'n'roll over Poland

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forwards and a much-improved defence.

Captain and veteran defender Hong Myung-Bo, playing in his fourth World Cup, was a rock at the back and kept dangerous Nigerian-born striker Emmanuel Olisadebe at bay.

While Korea accelerated the Poles, returning to the finals after a 16-year absence and considered one of the best Polish sides in years, seemed overawed by the occasion and couldn't move out of first gear.

Korea could have easily have won by more.

Hwang, a veteran of the 1994 finals, got the ball rolling with his tremendous strike -- his 50th international goal in his 98th appearance for his country.

They could have increased their lead on the half-hour, but Yoo was offside as he fired past Dudek.

However, he made no mistake quick succession as Pawel Krzyszalowicz replaced Maciej Zurawski and Tomasz Klos came on for the Poles in place of Jacek Bak, who took a blow on the hand.

The Poles were looking to Dudek to keep the home attack at bay.

But the South Koreans unleashed waves of attacks and little was seen of the Polish front line aside from the opening exchanges.

Olisadebe, who scored eight times in the qualifiers, looked lively early, finding Jacek Krzynowek in space - but the FC Nuremberg star snatched at his chance in the third minute from inside the box and his low effort flew wide.

The Polish striker was later booked for a crunching challenge on Yoo.

Hwang left the action just four minutes after the restart and Ahn Jung-Hwan took his place up front - but the change did not interrupt the Korean flow as Yoo, who played and scored at France 98, blasted home the second.

The Poles, who lost just one of ten qualifiers, made two switches in quick succession as Pawel Krzyszalowicz replaced Maciej Zurawski and Tomasz Klos came on for the Poles in place of Jacek Bak, who took a blow on the hand.

Soo was substituted on a stretcher on the hour after taking an apparent blow to the head and his replacement, Lee Chun-Soo, almost got on the scoresheet within seconds, but his shot hit the side netting.

Still the Poles refused to come out of their shell and it was their opponents who kept pressing for a momentous victory.

TEAMS

South Korea: Jae Lee, Kim, Choi, Hong, Kim, Yoo (Soo Lee 61), Young Lee, Song, Ji-sung, Seol (Cha 89), Hwang (A J Hwan 50).

Booked: Park, Cha

Goals: Hwang 26, Yoo 53

Poland: Dudek, Zewlakow, Hajto, Swierczewski, Kaluzny (Zewlakow 65), Olisadebe, Waldoch (capt), Krzynowek, Zurawski (Kryszalowicz 45), Bak (Tomasz Klos 51), Kozminski

Booked: Krzynowek, Hajto, Swierczewski

Attendance: 55,982
Referee: O Ruiz (Columbia)



PHOTO: STAR

A girl walks down the rainwater-filled Purana Paltan Road in the city yesterday. City roads get flooded out with rainwater because of run-down drainage system.

Hasina: Extra tax

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wants to eliminate the Awami League through torture and blamed it for "projecting Bangladesh as a nation of criminals."

Hasina said: "We established the image of the country as a liberal democracy, but the present government has tarnished that image."

She also mentioned the incident of withdrawing grants by the Danish government on allegation of corruption.

About the economic scenario, the Awami League chief said the present government had ruined the economy through "massive corruption." Within first six months, it has plundered Tk 4,000 crore by reducing the ADP and taking loans from the banks, she alleged.

"We gave an ADP of over Tk 19,000 crore, but this was slashed to Tk 16,000 crore postponing many development projects," she said.

She said that within six months of its rule, the BNP-Jamaat government had also taken from the banks Tk 4,000 to 5,000 crore, an amount

the Awami League did not take even during a year.

Hasina alleged that the alliance had won the election through rigging and was now trying to eliminate the AL by continuing torture on the people.

She welcomed the newcomers to the party, saying that their joining the Awami League would consolidate its strength. Hasina asked her party leaders and workers and the newcomers to work together for the welfare of the nation.

Awami League leaders Abdus Samad Azad, Zillur Rahman, Syeda Sajeda Chowdhury, Abdur Razzak, Abdul Jalil, Advocate Rahman Ali, Abdul Mannan, Abdul Mannan Khan, Opposition Chief Whip Abdus Sahid, Dr Mostafa Jalal Mohiuddin and K M Jahangir also attended the programme. Srimangal upazila Awami League president Kamollesh Bhattachariya and general secretary Ismail Hossain were present at the function.

Japan jive in thriller

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In a scrappy opening, Belgium's physical advantage was clear and Gert Verheyen, playing in attack with Wilmots, twice almost put them in front with towering headers.

Bart Goor should have shot the European side in front after 36 minutes but he fired wastefully wide when the ball fell perfectly to him from 10 metres out.

Wilmots squandered a good chance at the start of the second period but twisted acrobatically to beat Japan goalkeeper Seigo Narazaki in the 57th minute after Japan failed to clear their lines.

It seemed the floodgates would open but Japan struck back within two minutes when Belgian defender Van der Heyden left Inamoto's through ball and Suzuki poked it past a stranded Geert De Vlieger.

The stadium exploded in noise as Japan celebrated only their second ever goal at a World Cup tournament.

Nine minutes later they sensationally took the lead when Inamoto won the ball, raced on to the return and beat De Vlieger in fine style.

But Van der Heyden's cool lobbed effort under immense pressure after 75 minutes saved the day for Belgium.

Japan's French coach Troussier said afterwards: "It is true it was a draw but I'm very satisfied."

"We are the challengers in this group so it is a precious point for us."

"We tried to show our public the cheekiness of our attacking football and showed we lack a bit of precision and experience but I'm satisfied

ADP

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Saifur said the ADP was approved without any change in ECNEC recommendations and even the Prime Minister gave her full support to the priority sectors.

Rejecting observations of the critics, he said the ADP is not ambitious considering the normal increase in revenue expenditure plus inflation and foreign exchange depreciation that together constitute 8-10 per cent normal increase.

"If we do not estimate real increase at 10 per cent, people's expectation would not be reflected," said the Finance Minister to justify a 20 per cent increase in the ADP size for the next fiscal. The size of the revised ADP for 2001-2002 was Tk 16,000 crore.

However, he said, 5-6 per cent of ADPs always remained unutilized.

because everything is still possible.

"There are two matches left and we believe (that we can qualify)."

Russia play their first group H match against Tunisia in Kobe today.

TEAMS

Japan: Narazaki, Matsuda, Morioka (capt, Miyamoto 72), Nakata, Inamoto, Nakata, Ono (Alex 64), Toda, Ichikawa, Suzuki (Hiroaki Morishima 70), Yanagisawa

Booked: Toda, Inamoto
Goals: Suzuki 59, Inamoto 60

Belgium: Vlieger, Meir, Simons, Peeters, Van der Heyden, Van Buyten, Walem (Sonck 70), Verheyen (Strupar 83), Vanderhaeghe, Goor, Marc Wilmots

Booked: Van Der Heyden, Verheyen, Peeters, Van Meir

Goals: Wilmots 57, Van Der Heyden 75.

Attendance: 55,256
Referee: W Mattus Vega (Costa Rica)

Two-strokes

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bus, minibuss, microbus and taxi, and heavy vehicles of more than 25 years like truck, mini-truck, tank-lorry and van from January 1 this year.

In addition, the Ministry of Power and Mineral Resources has initiated a move to make the diesel and petrol-driven vehicles CNG-run.

Members of the Bangladesh Road Transport Authority, Dhaka Metropolitan Police and Environment Directorate have started identifying black smoke-emitting vehicles. Legal action is being taken against them.

Gold, forex

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without any name tag in the overhead bin of the Dubai bound aircraft. It contained 91,120 pounds, 3015 Saudi rials and 215 Kuwaiti dinars.

Those arrested are Mohammad Altafar Rahman (passport Q-0840056) and Mohammad Masum Ahmed (passport N-0188231). They were handed over to Airport Police Station.

Customs sources said the two persons reached Dhaka by a transit flight from Sylhet and they also had return tickets for Sylhet from Dubai tomorrow.

A departmental case was filed concerning the gold recovery. None could be arrested.

JS budget session

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Twelve of the 14 JP lawmakers walked out of the House only eight minutes before it was adjourned at 7:55 yesterday evening to resume at 7:00 this morning.

Leader of the JP Parliamentary Party Roushan Ershad lead the walkout protesting 'political vengeance' against the JP and its leader and deposed president HM Ershad.

Earlier, speaking on a point of order Roushan accused the government of implicating Ershad in various 'conspiratorial' cases and attempting to destroy the JP.

"The Jatiya Party has been doing politics as it believes in democracy despite the fact that the party and its leader Ershad had long been subjected to political persecution by different regimes," she said.

She claimed that the government actions against the JP were in violation of the article 48 of the constitution that guarantees the right to form an organisation.

Talking to reporters at the parliament lobby later, Roushan alleged that the government influenced the court in its verdict in the cassette scam case in which Ershad was sentenced to six months in jail.

"Should Ershad be punished for contempt of court, then the judge he talked with (about the verdict) should have been punished, as well," she held.

The JP walkout prompted Chief Whip of the House Khandakar Delwar Hossain to jump on his feet. Terming the JP protest illegal and against parliamentary practice, he demanded the speaker expunge Roushan's statement not covered

by the parliament's Rules of Procedure.

Delwar ridiculed Roushan's allegation that Ershad was being tortured and his party oppressed. "People will simply laugh off this allegation. It's Ershad who tortured the whole nation for nine years," the chief whip told the House.

Law Minister Moudud Ahmed said none should be allowed to speak on point of order once the scheduled business of the House is over.

The speaker replied that he did not acknowledge Roushan's statement as point of order. "I did not hear Roushan Ershad speaking about the walkout," said the speaker while expunging her statement.

Earlier, the budget session began 10 minutes behind the 5:00pm schedule when only 25 MPs were present. However, the number of lawmakers increased gradually to 175. Leaving the MPs of the BNP-led ruling coalition, members of both JP factions, Bangladesh Krishak Sramik Janata Dal and some independent lawmakers were also present.

Almost all the