

Mojaheed was not with AL-Badr, says defence

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The defence of Jamaat-e-Islami Secretary General Ali Ahsan Mollah said Mojaheed yesterday said the prosecution "intentionally" did not bring in witnesses, who were war crime victims or their family members, as they would not lie in court.

Mojaheed's counsel Syed Mizanur Rahman reiterated that their client might have been a leader of Islami Chhatra Sangha during the Liberation War in 1971 but he had "no involvement" in Al-Badr, a collaborator force blamed for killing intellectuals at the fag end of the war.

During his three-hour-and-40-minute closing argument, Mizanur talked about the third, fourth, fifth and sixth charges framed against the minister of the last BNP-led alliance government.

The three-member tribunal led by Justice Obaidul Hassan recorded defence arguments before adjourning the case proceedings until today, when the defence will place further submissions.

The fourth charge says: on July 26, 1971, Razakars abducted Abu Yusuf from Alfadanga in Faridpur and brought him to an army camp set up in Faridpur stadium. Mojaheed went to the camp and said something to a Pakistani army major, which caused Yusuf to be tortured severely.

Mizanur said "victim" Yusuf is still alive and he has testified before the tribunal in another case but the prosecution did not bring him in as a witness in this

case.

Almost similar charges were framed against expelled Jamaat member Abul Kalam Azad and Yusuf had testified in that case before the same tribunal. The court sentenced Azad to death but it acquitted him of the charge related to Yusuf.

According to the fifth charge, on August 30, 1971, Mojaheed, accompanied by now Jamaat chief Matiur Rahman Nizami, went to the army camp at the old MPs' Hostel in Nakhalpara, Dhaka. He started scolding Altaf Mahmud, Jahir Uddin Jalal, Badi, Rumi (son of Shaheed Janani Jahanara Imam), Jewel and Azad, who were imprisoned there.

Mojaheed then told one army captain that before the proclamation of clemency by the then president of Pakistan, the detainees would have to be killed. After this, Mojaheed with his accomplices killed the detainees by torture. The bodies of the victims could not be traced.

Mizanur said Jalal had testified before the court that he was tortured by the accused at the army camp but he did not mention it before the investigation officer of the case.

"But he [Jalal] had told [before the investigation officer] that he was taken to the army camp," said the court.

Mizanur said Jalal testified that he had seen Altaf Mahmud, Badi and Rumi at Ramna police station on August 29, 1971, evening but according to Rumi's mother Jahanara Imam's Ekattorer Dinguli, Rumi was

picked up early on August 30, 1971.

"How could he have seen Rumi at Ramna police station on August 29," questioned Mizanur, adding that Jalal's name was even mentioned in the book, which has been placed before the court as prosecution evidence.

"Overall, Jalal has lost all credibility," said Mizanur.

The tribunal said it was not impossible for a witness to mention a different date 42 years after the incident.

Jalal had testified that Mojaheed and Nizami had both tortured him during his detention.

Mizanur said the victims' family members know about the incident well but the prosecution did not produce them as their witnesses "intentionally".

It may be mentioned that Shaheen Reza Noor, son of martyred journalist Serajuddin Hossain, testified against Mojaheed. Ranjit Kumar Nath, a victim of war crimes, had testified against Mojaheed as well.

CONTEMPT PETITION AGAINST JALAL

The defence of Mojaheed yesterday filed a contempt petition against Jahir Uddin Jalal for allegedly assaulting one of Mojaheed's counsels.

While filing the petition, chief defence counsel for Jamaat-e-Islami leaders Abdur Razzaq said Jalal had assaulted Munshi Ahsan Kabir at the city's Segunbagicha area on Sunday afternoon. The tribunal fixed today for hearing the petition.

BNP burns

FROM PAGE 1

On Sunday, a Dhaka court cleared the way for the Anti-Corruption Commission to ask for Interpol's help in arresting Tarique in connection with the money laundering case.

In an immediate reaction, the Bogra and Sirajganj units of the BNP enforced a daylong hartal in the districts yesterday.

Besides, BNP affiliates Chhatra Dal, Jubo Dal and Swechchhasebak Dal yesterday staged protests and vandalised at least 17 vehicles and exploded a dozen homemade crude bombs in different parts of the capital and in Narayanganj.

Meanwhile, BNP spokesperson Shamsuzzaman Dudu yesterday said Tarique was coming home soon to take charge of the party. "On his return, he [Tarique] will counter all the allegations raised against him," Dudu told a press briefing at the BNP's Nayapaltan central office.

In another development, Tarique Rahman, elder son of BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, yesterday sent a legal notice to a minister in connection with "derogatory and defamatory" remarks against him.

Tarique issued the notice through a lawyer, asking Environment and Forest Minister Hasan Mahmud to either prove the allegation the minister had brought against him or apologise in public within two weeks.

According to the notice, the minister at a programme in Chittagong on May 25 compared Tarique to "Roghru Dakat" (an infamous robber). He had said Tarique indulged in corruption during the last BNP-Jamaat-led government's rule.

The notice also alleged that the minister on the same day had said that the BNP had indirectly proved that it was in favour of corruption and terrorism by declaring Tarique the future prime minister of Bangladesh.

Tarique's counsel warned that legal action would be taken against the minister if he failed to prove the allegation or apologise duly.

This is the latest in a series of political rows throughout this week between the ruling party and the opposition over Tarique's speech on May 20. Tarique left the country for London during the last military-backed caretaker government's rule in 2008 and was largely quiet until May 20.

"COURT ORDER INEFFECTIVE"

Mahbub Uddin Khokon, a counsel for Tarique, yesterday claimed that the lower court order, which on Sunday allowed the ACC to seek the help of Interpol in arresting Tarique, was ineffective.

Khokon told The Daily Star that the ACC could not submit such an application and even the court had no power to allow it as per Criminal Code of Procedure and Anti-Corruption Commission Act 2004. He, however, could not specifically say which law restricted the ACC and the court from doing so.

Stick with Bangladesh

FROM PAGE 1

garments from factories in Bangladesh to secure their support for enhanced safety inspections."

The US diplomat said engineers and architects from the Bangladeshi diaspora in the United States had stepped up to help recruit a corps of independent safety inspectors.

"The United States is also funding local labour and civil society organisations to promote respect for fundamental rights at work, including freedom to join a labour union," she added.

On the role of buyers in improving work conditions and safety, Sherman said buyers had absolutely a very critical role and they must be engaged. "We'll continue to work in every way to get the buyers come to the table in every appropriate way to play the part that they must for a sustainable solution."

She said everyone had a role to play and it would have to be ensured that a tragedy like the Rana Plaza collapse did not visit Bangladesh again. "At the end of the day, it's for the government to take the lead role...efforts to that end must be sustained in order to resolve all the problems."

Turning to the political situation in Bangladesh, the US under secretary said she was worried over the violence, saying Bangladesh must free itself of this long-standing cycle of election-year violence.

In reply to a question at a joint press conference about the political stalemate over an election-time government, Sherman, who led the US delegation to the second Bangladesh-US Partnership Dialogue on May 26-27 in Dhaka said it was for Bangladesh to decide how the election would be held.

"That's really a decision for Bangladesh. It's wonderful to see the vibrancy of democracy and we look forward to a free, fair, inclusive and credible election," she told reporters.

Asked why she was so optimistic over a credible election despite the gap between two major parties, she said, "My optimism is because I've seen what Bangladesh has done since

independence. With every turn of the wheel Bangladesh has chosen democracy and has chosen to make progress towards a stronger and better democracy. It is our hope this is a choice Bangladesh will continue to make.

"US democracy is more than 200 years...we still try every year to get better."

She said it was also important that people were able to march and demonstrate peacefully, but violence was not acceptable in a democratic society. It has to be made sure every voter can cast his/her vote freely because the individual voter makes a difference.

Sherman, who led a high-powered US delegation to the second US-Bangladesh Partnership Dialogue in the last two days in Dhaka, said both the countries had worked hard to disrupt the terrorist network and combat the threat of violent extremism.

"We also applaud Bangladesh's cooperation with India to combat terrorism in both countries, which is helping to keep the entire region, and the world, safer and more secure," said the US official, who is the third ranking diplomat in the US State Department.

She said the struggle against violent extremism had been a long one, "but we have been inspired by the ordinary Bangladeshis who declare they are proud Muslims, proud Bengalis, and proud citizens of an open and pluralistic democracy."

Earlier, the two countries concluded the second partnership dialogue with discussions over four areas of cooperation, namely, development and governance, regional integration, trade and investment, security cooperation and strengthening private sector forum.

Foreign Secretary Shahidul Huq and Wendy Sherman co-chaired the dialogue.

Speaking at the joint press briefing at state guest house Meghna, Sherman said Dhaka and Washington would work together to deepen relations not only bilaterally but regionally and globally.

She said Bangladesh was becoming an important

player regionally and globally as it sits at the centre of a dynamic region with a strong vibrant democracy and economic growth. The country has much to offer to its neighbours.

Asked if the Tazreen and Rana Plaza tragedies would impact negatively on Bangladesh's GSP facility, she said, making a decision in this regard "has its own process taking place in Washington...it'll be decided sometime in June. That's all I have to say today."

Regarding Ticfa (Trade and Investment Cooperation Framework Agreement), she said, she looked forward to the signing of the agreement for a deepening of trade relations since both governments were committed to strengthening trade and investments.

Asked when Ticfa would be signed, she said, "Ticfa is only one of the mechanisms in deepening our relationship. We've so many mechanisms in doing so."

She further made it clear that there was no link between the GSP and Ticfa.

In reply to a question, she said in terms of human rights, this was a conversation which the two countries had with each other in a transparent and forthright manner.

"We are both back and forth and we are very straight forward about ensuring that democracy in both of our countries continues to be strengthened and improves in all of these dimensions."

On media, civil society and human rights situation in Bangladesh, Sherman said Bangladesh had a history of a very vibrant civil society as its democracy demonstrated.

"We hope and trust that a vibrant civil society will continue. We highlight and elevate the importance of civil society where justice and rule of law must prevail, people must be held accountable, impunity cannot be tolerated."

Sherman, who left for Washington last evening, wrapping up her two-day hectic engagement, went through all her programmes, except for a meeting with Khaleda Zia.

Like city polls

FROM PAGE 1

The premier said the next general election of the country would be held as per Westminster system, which is being practised in parliamentary democracies across the world.

The opposition parties were participating in the ongoing city corporation polls, and "I hope they will participate in the next general elections, too," Hasina added.

The premier also said the present Election Commission was independent and performing its duties without any interference from the government.

She mentioned that the president of the country had formed the Election Commission through a search committee after holding dialogues with all political parties.

"The government has ensured that the Election Commission will work independently," Hasina told the meeting.

A total of 5,645 elections, including by-polls and local government elections, had been held in a free and fair manner under the present government.

"No one complained about those elections," she said.

The premier said her government was committed to providing a strong base for democracy, and also would do its best to ensure that democratic practice continued in the country.

During the meeting, Sherman and Hasina discussed issues related to the garments sector, Savar tragedy, Rohingyas and US-Bangladesh relations.

About the garments sector, Hasina said her government had increased the minimum age of RMG workers after it assumed power.

The government had recently formed a wage board for the garment workers which would declare new wage structures for them, she added.

Hasina also said the government would amend the country's existing labour law to accommodate the rights and welfare issues of the garment workers.

About the recent tragedy in the garments sector, Sherman said her country had also passed through such situations in the 1900s.

"We changed it through a process of transformation and I hope Bangladesh will be able to overcome the situation in a similar way," the US under secretary added.

While discussing the Rohingya issue, Sherman said, "I hope the Myanmar government will create necessary conditions for Rohingyas."

About US-Bangladesh ties, Sherman said Bangladesh had been included in all of President Obama's initiatives.

She also expressed her satisfaction over the condition of democracy in Bangladesh.

Ambassador at-large M Ziauddin and US Ambassador in Dhaka Dan W Mozena, among others, were present during the meeting.

\$1.2b WB loan

FROM PAGE 1

The minister was talking to reporters after M Teresa Kho, country director of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), met him at his secretariat office in the afternoon.

Muhith said negotiations with the Washington-based lending agency had already been held on the proposed financing.

The World Bank is likely to provide \$500 million credit for social safety net, \$400 million for coastal embank-

ment and \$300 million for construction of modern silos.

It was coincidental that the proposed financing for the three projects would amount to \$1.2 billion and it was the same amount which the WB was scheduled to give against the Padma Bridge project, Muhith said.

About the meeting with the ADB country director, he said they had discussed the implementation and progress of the ongoing ADB-assisted

projects in the country.

The discussion included issues related to ADB's proposed financing in the energy, water supply and secondary education sectors, the minister told reporters.

Besides, discussions also took place regarding necessary action to get the second tranche of the Manila-based lending agency's credit for the country's capital market development in September, he added.

Obama-Xi summit soon

AP, Beijing

An upcoming summit with President Barack Obama comes at a "critical juncture" in relations between China and the US, Chinese President Xi Jinping said Monday.

Xi said he expected positive results from the talks, which will be their first face-to-face meeting since Obama's re-election and Xi's promotion to head of the Communist Party last November.



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বাংলাদেশ ডেভেলপমেন্ট ব্যাংক লিঃ

হেড অফিস : ৮, রাজউক এডিনিউ, ঢাকা।

এক্সাবলিশমেন্ট এন্ড কমন সার্ভিস ডিপার্টমেন্ট

বিষয় : তালিকাভুক্তিকরণ

২০১৩-২০১৪ অর্থ বছর অর্থাৎ ১ জুলাই, ২০১৩ হতে ৩০ জুন, ২০১৪ পর্যন্ত ১ (এক) বছর মেয়াদে তালিকাভুক্তির জন্য অত্র ব্যাংকের প্রধান কার্যালয় কর্তৃক নিম্নলিখিত ব্যবসায় নিয়োজিত প্রকৃত ও খ্যাতিমান প্রতিষ্ঠানসমূহের নিকট হতে দরখাস্ত আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে :

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স্বাঃ/-

(মোঃ আবু তাহের)

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