

Relatives, staff occupy

FROM PAGE 1
 moment, Faisal said. Contacted, Syed Ashraf's personal secretary also admitted that the minister does not live there.

Flat No 602 in the same building is allotted to ruling Awami League MP Fazle Noor Taposh. There, a woman said she was Taposh's sister and resided in the apartment along with her family.

Also, at Col (retd) Shaukat Ali's flat 203 in building No 2 of Nakhpara, a woman claimed she was a relative and was staying here with her family members.

Right in the building, flat 504 of Hasan Mahmud, environment and forest minister, was found locked.

A number of MPs, even President Abdul Hamid while he was Speaker, several times blasted the treasury and the opposition bench lawmakers for allowing outsiders to live in the flats, saying it caused frequent thefts and embarrassment to other lawmakers living there with their family members.

Talking to The Daily Star,

some MPs who live in the flats with family members said outsiders through anti-social activities cause a terrible nuisance and pollute the social environment in the residential areas.

"I am tired of raising this issue. It's really hard for us to live here with our wives and children because of the outsiders who engage in illicit and anti-social activities inside the flats and building areas," Hafizuddin Ahmed, a JP MP, said last week.

"The Parliament Secretariat several times has served notices on the MPs concerned since March 2010 asking them to leave their flats if they keep allowing outsiders to stay there."

A BNP MP, requesting anonymity, said staying in flats at the MP buildings is very lucrative as a lawmaker does not need to pay even a single taka as rent, except for only Tk 600 service charge per month.

Some caretakers of the buildings said most of the outsiders who live illegally in MP flats are basically engaged in different "lobbying businesses."

LIST OF LAWMAKERS

AL MPS : AKM Fazlul Haq, Murad Hasan, Abdur Rahman, KM Rashiduzzaman, Reza Ali, Rahmat Ali, Abdul wadud, Shahrier Alam, Aslamul Haq, Golam Sabur, Md Amanullah, Sirajul Akbor, AKM Bahauddin, Sheikh Afluddin, Moazzem Hossain Ratan, Mahmud Us Samad Chowdhury, Enamul Haq (Raj-4), Rafiqul Islam, Mosharrar Hossain (Ctg-1), Monirul Islam, Abul Kamal Azad (Rangpur-6), Nasrul Hamid, Imran Ahmed, Maj Gen (retd) Abdus Salam, Nasimul Alam Chowdhury, Kamal Ahmed Majumder, Mizanur Rahman Khan, Sheikh Helal Uddin, Chayan Islam, Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh, Amina Ahmed, Apu Ukil, Parvin Talukder, Momtaz Begum, Shahida Tarekh Dipti and Momtaz Begum

MINISTERS: Syed Ashraf Islam, Abul Hasan Mahmood Ali, Mostafa Faruk Mohammad, Dr Hasan Mahmud, Hasanul Haq Inu

STATE MINISTERS: Mostafizur Rahman, Motahar Hossain,

BNP MPS: Shahiduddin Chowdhury Anee, Kaji Shah Mofazzal Hossain Kaykobad, Mosharrar Hossain, Harunur Rashid, Mazibor Rahman Sarwar, Hasina Ahmed

JP MPS: ASM Abdul Mannan, Abu Talha, ASM Golam Reza, Anisul Islam Mahmud, Zafar Iqbal Siddique, Kazi Faruq Kader, Golam Kibria Tipu, Nasrin Jahan Ratna, Salma Islam, AKM Mayeedul Islam

SOURCE: PARLIAMENT SECRETARIAT

"We have to remain silent when we see some outsiders bring floating sex workers from Manik Mia Avenue inside their flats," a caretaker said last week, seeking anonymity.

The Sangsad Committee, headed by Chief Whip Abdus Shahid, in late 2009 formed a sub-committee to address the issue.

The sub-committee, which Shahid himself leads,

identified 66 MPs who were violating rules by allowing outsiders to stay in their flats.

Of them, 46 belong to the Awami League, 11 to the Jatiya Party, six to the BNP and three to the Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal, Jamaat-e-Islami and Bangladesh Jatiya Party (BJP).

The Daily Star has obtained the list, submitted by the sub-committee in June 2010.

Despite newspaper reports on this issue, the situation still remains the same even after three years, as those MPs neither handed over the flats to the Parliament Secretariat nor took any measures to evict outsiders from their flats.

Chief Whip Abdus Shahid told The Daily Star last week that he was not aware of any development after 2010 as it was the Parliament Secretariat which was supposed to keep him updated on this.

Two lawmakers, who were also members of the Sangsad Committee, said yesterday that the committee and the Parliament Secretariat finally had failed to take any steps against those illegally occupying their flats.

ABM Ashrafuddin Nizan, a member of the sub-committee said, as per their recommendations, the Parliament Secretariat also served notices on those illegally staying in 66 flats. "But none of them have left."

According to the working paper of the May 6, 2010 meeting of the sub-committee, it was also proposed to assign a magistrate to drive out those illegal occupiers.

It also proposed that necessary be taken to cancel allocation of flats if the MPs concerned fail to drive out those who were living there within 15 days of getting notice.

Asked, Nizan said nothing could be implemented to drive the illegal residents out of those flats.

Talking to The Daily Star, Information Minister Hasanul Haq Inu yesterday said although he does not live in his flat, he sometimes visits there to interact with people of his party and constituency.

War trial 'a joke'

FROM PAGE 1
 Its report published on January 3, 1972, reads: "To his fellow reporters on the Bengali language paper where he worked, Chowdhury Mueenuddin [Mueen Uddin] was a pleasant, well-mannered and intelligent young man. He had an open handsome face, with a neatly trimmed beard, and there was nothing exceptional about him except perhaps that he often received telephone calls from the leader of a right-wing Moslem political party."

"But, investigations in the last few days show, those calls were significant. For Mr Mueen Uddin has been identified as the head of a secret, commando-like organisation of fanatic Moslems that murdered several hundred prominent Bengali professors, doctors, lawyers and journalists in Dacca [Dhaka] brickyard."

Local newspapers also carried front-page stories with Mueen's portrait just after victory in the war. The papers said the "killer", also the operation in-charge of Al-Badr, has to be found.

Mueen went into hiding when Bangladesh won the war.

Bangla and English newspaper also reported that a captured Al-Badr man had disclosed Mueen's atrocious role in 1971.

A national English daily reported with the headline: "Absconding Al Badr Gangster". It said, "Chowdhury Mainuddin [Mueen Uddin], a member of the banned fanatic Jamaat Islam Party, has been described as the 'Operation in Charge' of the killing of intellectuals in Dacca [Dhaka] by Abdul Khaleque, a captured ring leader of the Al-Badr and office-bearer of the Jamaat-e-Islam."

"The fascist Al-Badr force was responsible for the killing of the intellectuals backed by the Pakistan Army before their humiliating surrender."

"Chowdhury Mainuddin has been absconding presumably since December 16," the report read.

Mueen told Al Jazeera, "I was in my job and on duty until the end after 15th of December 1971." He was a staff reporter of the then Bangla national daily Purbadesh.

The New York Times report said, "Mr Mueenuddin [Mueen Uddin] was last seen on Dec 13 after having had an argument with a fellow reporter at their paper,

Purbodesh [Purbadesh]. That reporter was kidnapped from his house by Al-Badr [Al-Badr] a few hours later."

"Atiqur Rahman, another reporter in their office, has started a search for Mr Mueenuddin," the report said, quoting Atiqur, "We will find him or there can be no rest for any of us."

Journalist Atiqur Rahman about 24 years after the Liberation War in an interview with UK-based Channel 4 narrated his experience in dealing with Mueen.

In the channel's documentary titled "War Crimes File", Atiqur Rahman said he was also a target of Al-Badr and Mueen.

Atiqur, who later passed away, had said Mueen asked for his home address. And later his name and home address was found in the hit list of Al-Badr. Atiqur said he had only given his home address to Mueen and nobody else.

The documentary also interviewed many other eyewitnesses and victims who gave evidence of Mueen's direct involvement in the killings of intellectuals as an Al-Badr leader.

The documentary brought him into the spotlight decades after he had fled from Bangladesh.

Jamaat's then student wing Islami Chhatra Sangha had turned into Al-Badr, the tribunals' in its judgments said.

In 1971, convicted war criminal Mojaheed and Matiur Rahman Nizami, now the Jamaat chief who is being tried for war crimes, were top leaders of Islami Chhatra Sangha.

Mueen too was a Chhatra Sangha leader even though he claimed before Al Jazeera, "I resigned from my political post after the military crackdown and I concentrated on my journalist career since then."

Mueen has never returned to Bangladesh but he claimed before Al Jazeera, "Well, the path is... it is an independent country and everyone must accept the reality... I do accept the reality, I travel to Bangladesh on and off."

He now lives in London and is a trustee and former chairman of Muslim Aid.

Mueen will not come to Bangladesh to face trial, he told Al Jazeera: "And how anyone can subject people's lives under such a tribunal? This is corrupt to the core. It is rotten to the core, rather. And this should be stopped immediately. If the people want to see justice, then it should be under UN supervision in international arena, not under this corrupt regime."

Forty-two years after the war, the prosecution brought charges against him and another "Al-Badr leader" Ashrafuzzaman Khan, now living in the US.

International Crimes Tribunal-2 framed 11 charges against the "Al-Badr leaders" for their alleged involvement in the killing of 18 intellectuals between the early hours of December 11 and December 15, 1971.

Mueen was among

FROM PAGE 1
 "I want justice," Shumon appealed to the court as tears were rolling down his face. He gave a vivid description of his mother's abduction and torture along with other intellectuals at Mohammadpur Physical Training Centre and murder at Rayerbazar killing ground.

The three-member tribunal led by Justice Obaidul Hassan with members Justice Md Mozibur Rahman Miah and Judge Md Shahinur Islam recorded Shumon's testimony.

State-appointed defence counsel Abdus Shukur Khan cross-examined the prosecution witness for a few minutes. Then the tribunal adjourned the proceeding until today when Shumon is set to face further cross-examination.

The tribunal framed 11 charges against the duo for their alleged involvement in the killing of 18 intellectuals at the fag-end of the Liberation War.

During his 65-minute testimony, fifty-year-old Shumon said his mother had worked in the advertisement department of weekly "Lalana" in 1971 besides her job as the editor and publisher of Sheelalipi.

Besides, Selina Parvin used to write in daily Ittefaq, Purba Pakistan, Purbadesh, weekly Lalana and Begum. She also worked as an assistant of Nurjahan Begum, editor of weekly Begum, added Shumon.

"My mother was not a famous journalist but she was killed by Al-Badr since pro-liberation writers including Prof Munier Chowdhury, journalist Shahidullah Kaiser, Zahir Raihan and ANM Golam Mostafa used to write in her weekly," he observed.

Around 1:30pm on December 13, 1971,

Shumon and his maternal uncle Uzir were on their rooftop and her mother was preparing lunch at their house on 115 New Circular Road [Now 29, Shaheed Journalist Selina Parvin Road].

Suddenly a number of vehicles appeared in front of their house. Shumon and his uncle had seen a jeep, a microbus splattered with mud, and a military truck, which was a little away, said Shumon.

Moments later they had heard the sounds of knocking on the door. Advocate Qamrul Islam Syed Salauddin, who was a lawmaker and lived in an adjacent flat, opened the door, said Shumon, adding that they got down to see those people entering their building.

As Salauddin showed them Selina Parvin's flat, they had knocked on her door and asked her about her identity when she opened the door.

"One of the strangers saw us [Shumon and his uncle] and pointing his gun at us told us 'hands up'. Me and uncle Uzir got down and went beside my mother."

They had asked Selina Parvin to go to the Secretariat with them, but she refused as she didn't have a curfew pass. But they said it wouldn't matter, said Shumon, adding that when he wanted to accompany her, they did not allow him.

"Faces of the strangers, who were carrying firearms, were covered by mufflers," added Shumon.

"Keeping her hand on my head, my mother said, 'Shumon, take your lunch with your uncle. I will come back in a few minutes.' This was my mother's last words with me," said an emotion-choked Shumon.

The armed strangers wrapped a light towel

around her head to cover her eyes, tied her hands and took her away on the microbus, said Shumon.

After independence, Shumon's uncles on December 17 learned from Shamsheer Chowdhury, brother of martyr Munier Chowdhury, that Selina's body was found on Rayerbazar killing ground.

Her body was recovered on the following day and she was buried at Azimpur graveyard, said Shumon.

"When I tried to find out the reasons behind the abduction and killing of my mother, I learned that she used to spend the money she had earned from her weekly for the treatment of wounded freedom fighters," said Shumon.

He also learned that his mother used to write for daily Purbadesh. Chowdhury Mueen Uddin also worked there and used to call Selina "bubu" [sister], said the witness.

"Seeing Mueen Uddin's photograph on the newspapers, uncle Uzir had later said this man [Mueen Uddin] was among the abductors," said Shumon.

The witness added he had met Delwar Hossain, the lone survivor from Rayerbazar killing ground, in 1996. Delwar told him that his mother along with around 25 people was kept confined at Mohammadpur Physical Training Centre.

"After talking with Delwar Hossain and other sources, I learned that Mueen Uddin was Al-Badr operation in charge and Ashrafuzzaman was also an Al-Badr man. They were involved in the killings of intellectuals," said Shumon.

In another case against war crimes accused BNP leader Abdul Alim, the tribunal adjourned the proceeding until tomorrow for his illness.

Twin bomb explosions kill four in Karachi

AFP, Karachi
 Two separate bomb explosions late Saturday killed four people and wounded seven others in Pakistan's port city Karachi, police said.

The first bomb, targeting a government official, exploded in the Eesa Nagri area, killing a police officer and wounding seven people including the official, police said.

"Apparently the bomb was planted in a motorcycle. One police officer has been killed and seven people injured. Condition of some of them is critical," Nasir Lodhi, a senior police official, told AFP.

The second bomb exploded minutes later, killing three people inside a house in the Patel Parra area of the city.

Police official Safdar Mashwani told AFP that it appeared the three people were making a bomb inside the house when it exploded, killing them instantly.

Taliban bribe

FROM PAGE 16
 to plant deadly roadside booby traps, be decoys in ambushes and even act as suicide bombers.

Despite the Islamic fundamentalists' claim they have no children in their ranks, extremists have been actively recruiting orphaned and homeless young boys and training them to use guns, IEDs and suicide vests.

In return, they ply the desperate youngsters with sweets and chocolate, an investigation for Channel 4's Dispatches programme has learned.

Afghan orphan Neaz told how he was just eight when he was promised a handful of coins by Taliban fighters to convert him to their cause.

The boy had been tending his father's flock of sheep when coalition forces bombed his village.

"The Taliban were hiding in our house when a helicopter came and bombed us," he said.

"My father was hit in his heart and his head, he was torn apart. My mother was hit in the chest and died. I have no one," he added.

In the immediate after-

math of the raid, Neaz was kidnapped by Taliban leaders and taken to a nearby town and shown how to use guns and make IEDs.

They plied him with sweets and he was initially delighted when they said they planned to bring him an extra-special gift -- a suicide vest packed with bullets and grenades.

"They made me try it on. The grenades went all around my body and then they offered me the coins [50 Afghanis - about 60p]," he said.

"They told me to blow myself up at a checkpoint. I asked what I'd do with the money if I had to blow myself up. But they kept encouraging me, telling me that if I did it I would go to heaven."

He finally escaped and walked nine miles to turn himself in at a police station. Now aged ten, Neaz lives in an orphanage in Lashkar Gah.

Film-maker Najibullah Quraishi said: "Thousands of children are being recruited and taught to make bombs or become suicide bombers. It is common for 13-year-olds to carry guns."

Two firms buy

FROM PAGE 16
 In September 2011, the authorities selected four bidders, including these two, for constructing the bridge under the World Bank finance.

As the WB cancelled its credit on the allegation of a corruption conspiracy, the government last month asked all the four pre-qualified bidders to participate in the tender process.

Padma Bridge Project Director Shafiqul Islam told The Daily Star that the other two bidders had also contacted them to buy tender schedules.

They are Samsung C&T Corporation of South Korea and Vinci-HCC, a joint venture of France and India.

Yesterday's meeting was the first one between the Finance Division, Bangladesh Bank and the Bridges Division after the government revived the project.

Officials of the Bridges Division told the meeting that the pre-qualified bidders had sought a guarantee of payments in foreign currency and that without such a guarantee, bidders' participation in the tender process might become uncertain.

The Bridges Division in writing also informed the Finance Division of this concern.

The Finance Division assured the Bridge Division that Tk 6,852 crore had been set aside for the Padma bridge in the current budget and the successful bidders would be paid in foreign currency from this allocation.

An official of the Bridges Division at the meeting said they might need \$500 million in foreign currency for the Padma bridge in the current FY.

BB officials replied that \$150 million had been kept in a separate account. If more foreign currency is required in the current fiscal, it would be provided.

A pre-bid meeting will be held on August 8. The repre-

sentatives of the Finance Division and BB were requested yesterday to attend that meeting to remove all confusions of the bidders about their payment.

The bidders have to purchase tender documents by September 9.

The finance minister in parliament said the government would open a separate foreign currency account of \$1.2-1.4 billion with Bangladesh Bank for bearing the foreign exchange liability of the project.

In 2011, all work under the project stopped after the World Bank raised graft allegations.

Dipu Moni blasts media reports

FROM PAGE 1
 last four and a half years, she argued that the reports were published without caring about facts, which goes against the concept of fair and courageous journalism.

Addressing a press conference at her ministry, Dipu Moni said she went abroad every time with the consent of the prime minister, who gave her approval after studying the pros and cons of every visit.

Contradicting the figure published in a Bangla daily on July 17, the foreign minister said she made 114 foreign tours, including 36 with the president and the prime minister.

She claimed that the number of her bilateral visits was 62, not 17 as reported. Of the multilateral visits, 28 were to the UN, seven on Non-Aligned

movement programmes, eight for various Commonwealth programmes and six for meetings of the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group, of which she is the chair for one term.

Besides, she visited countries to attend Saarc summits and other meetings, ARF Ministerial Meeting, Shangri-La Dialogue, OIC and Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD).

She said she stayed 517 days overseas, including her flight time and stopover at airports, which is 31 percent of 1,660 days since her first official visit. (This means, in every three days she stayed one day overseas.)

But according to newspaper reports she spent 600 days abroad from February 1, 2009 to July 10 this year.

About the comparison of

her visits with those of the US secretary of state, Dipu Moni said she did not want to comment on such association.

But she added the US secretary of state travelled by her official jet aircraft, but even the prime minister of Bangladesh had to take commercial flights.

"The reports are untrue, fabricated, baseless and motivated," she said, adding: "I don't know the motive of this campaign against the country's foreign minister."

In an oblique reference to Manabzamin, Dipu Moni said the foreign ministry had sent a rejoinder to the daily concerned but the paper did not publish it with due importance.

"I will do whatever is needed to establish my right as a citizen," she said in an emotional voice.

She also highlighted some achievements, including winning the maritime boundary case against Myanmar, taking a lead role in establishing peace in South Asia, establishment of BIMSTEC secretariat in Dhaka, receiving awards for success in MDGs and leading the climate vulnerability forum and Dhaka's election to more than 20 UN bodies.

Dipu Moni also claimed that Bangladesh had been able to establish the best of relations with the USA, Russia, China, the European Union, East Asian nations, Japan, Korea and Australia with expansion of trade and investment.

"Had the foreign minister been sitting idle, these successes would not have come," she said.

War hero testifies

From page 16
 and Pakistani occupational army had arrested his father Sohrah Ali Pramanik that day and tortured him severely to squeeze information about his son's whereabouts.

"My father was shot and killed in front of my mother as he didn't give them any information," the witness added.

He said they [Pakistani army and Al-Badr] had also killed Manu, Vadu, Sosthi Pramanik and Gyanendranath Hawlader, among others.

In his about-one-hour-and-40-minute-long deposition, Latif described how he along with other freedom fighters had led operations against the Pakistani army.

The witness said he and Alauddin had gone to spy on the army at Bera Police

Station in Pabna on August 15.

"We were caught near the LSD launch terminal by Nizami's follower Al-Badr men," he said, adding, they were taken to Nagarbari army camp set up on some ferries in the Jamuna river.

"I saw 10 other detainees at that camp. I also saw Nizami talking with the Pakistani army," added Latif.

The witness said a Pakistani captain had tortured him for two to three hours and put a burning cigarette on his back.

"I couldn't sleep for 10-15 days on my back," Latif said, adding, he still bore the marks of that torture.

Failing to get any information, the captain directed his men to kill them. The army and Al-Badr tied them to two sacks of bricks and threw

them in the river.

Latif and Alauddin survived as the sacks had loosened from their bodies.

The witness concluded his testimony identifying Nizami at the dock.

The proceeding of the case was adjourned until today.

Earlier, the tribunal extended the last chance of producing defence witnesses in the war crimes case against Salauddin Quader Chowdhury.

As the tribunal yesterday asked the defence about it on completion of cross-examination of the third defence witness, counsel Fakhru Islam sought an adjournment until July 23, which the tribunal accepted.

The tribunal also accepted additional documents submitted by the defence.

Rise, young

FROM PAGE 16
 There will be three rounds in a divisional phase. The winners of this phase will participate in the national level competition.

The divisional competition for the Junior Climate Champions will begin after the end of registration on August 20. The national level competition will take place in September.

To help participants enrich their knowledge on environment, climate change and its impact on Bangladesh information kits will be available at the website: www.juniorclimatechampion.com

Noman said the winners at the national level competitions will be invited to the Climate Awards giving ceremony by the end of this year.

HSBC and The Daily Star have been jointly organising the HSBC-The Daily Star Climate Awards since 2010 to recognise the initiatives of organisations and individuals to protect and preserve the environment and tackle the impact of climate change.

The Daily Star Managing Editor Salehuddin Ahmed also spoke at the conference.