

Logs are placed on a road in Phulgazi upazila of Feni yesterday during the dawn-to-dusk hartal called to protest the murder of upazila chairman Ekramul Haque. PHOTO: BANGLAR CHOKH

## Jainal Hazari knew it all

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municipality, and Sohel, a local cadre, according to eyewitnesses and district AL

eaders. But The Daily Star could not independently verify the claim.

Asked about Nizam's demand for his remand, Jainal Hazari, who once came to be known as the godfather of Feni's crime world, said he had no problem with that.

"Then I can divulge everything about this heinous murder," Jainal, who has been living in the capital since the political changeover of 2007, told this newspaper by phone.

According to AL leaders in Feni, Ekramul was once a close aide of Nizam. But he became the lawmaker's archrival when he decided to take part in the January 5 national election from Feni-1, next to Nizam's constituency.

Ekram had to quit the polls race following pressure from Nizam, locals and AL leaders say.

Early this month, Nizam got furious with Ekram, who allegedly leaked to journalists documents that show Nizam had come out of jail by submitting fake papers to the High Court.

According to reports published in the Bangla dailies Prothom Alo and Manabzamin on May 10, Nizam was given 10 years' jail sentence in an arms case in August 2000. But he came out of a Chittagong jail in December 2005 through forgery.

Nizam blamed Ekramul, Jainal Hazari and several others for the leak, sources said.

On May 19, a report published in daily Hazarika, a Feni-based newspaper owned by Jainal Hazari, said a plot had been hatched to abduct those who had exposed Nizam.

At the press conference, Nizam referred to this report, saying Jainal Hazari must have known of it beforehand. "So the truth will out if he is interrogated.

He also refuted claims that he had influenced Ekram's family to name local BNP leader Mahtab Uddin Chowdhury as the prime suspect in the case.

"The case statement was written by Ekram's brother Rezaul Haque Jasim," he

But Rezaul told The Daily Star that the family was unhappy about the way the FIR was written on instructions from AL leaders. "We are concerned about the investigation."

AL sources said the FIR was prepared on the instructions of Nizam.

Police have yet to identify the killers.

Paritosh Ghosh, superintendent of Feni police, said the law enforcers were collecting information about the murder.

"An investigation does not work like magic. We hope to arrest the perpetrators soon," he said.

He added he had apprehended that such killings might occur in Feni sadar and more murders could take place in retaliation.

Over the last three days, police detained 23 people as suspects, but later released all but two after interrogation.

The two still in police custody are Mohammad Iqbal, 22, and Mohammad

Shakhawat, 24. Both are Jubo League activists of Feni sadar, where the killing took place,

Asked about Nizam's demand for quizzing Jainal Hazari, Paritosh said investigators would do so if necessary.

PRESS CONFERENCE Shushen Shil, joint general secretary of

Feni Jubo League, read out a written statement on behalf of Nizam at the press conference where none of Ekram's family members was present. Nizam later told The Daily Star that he

did not say that Jainal Hazari was involved in the murder and that he only meant that Jainal knew of it before-

He also dismissed reports that he had come out of jail through faking documents and said he had all the documents ready to be handed to journal ists.

He, however, did not give any such documents.

To reporters' suggestions that local AI men were demonstrating against him on the streets, he said they were BNP men.

Asked about feuds within the AL, he said the party was united under the leadership of Alauddin Ahmed, former protocol officer of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

'NIZAM CAPTURED EVERYTHING'

According to Jainal Hazari, Nizam has captured everything in Feni with support from Alauddin.

About the investigation, he said the administration had become servile to Nizam and that it would do nothing against him.

Talking about the report published in his paper, he said he knew everything in Feni and the news was based on concrete information.

# Dhanmondi playground

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hear what the Prime Minister's Office has to say about this since the club is named after Sheikh Jamal, the son of the Father of the Nation.

"We have to take into consideration the political sensitivity involved, High Court orders and position of the local government ministry," he said, adding that he would talk to the law officer of the DSCC about the matter.

DSCC law officer Mofizul Islam, however, said closing the main gate was an illegal action as it was a public space. Md Alamgir said, "We have to

respect both the environmental campaigners' demand for freeing the playground and occupation of the club run by influential people."

The DSCC authorities on April 24 had opened the playground for all but left intact the structures of the elitist club occupying the play-

The DSCC demolished a workers' shed of the club on May 18 but again spared three large semi-concrete structures housing the club just so that it could say that it complied with a 2011 High Court order that directed freeing the playground of illegal structures except those meant for sports.

Local Government Engineering Department, however, was working in full swing to build two tennis courts, two badminton courts and a basketball court at the playground for the club with Tk 1.63 crore public money.

On a visit to the playground yes terday afternoon, scores of dren and youths were seen playing in the playground. A nine-grader Tasrif Ahnab from Kalabagan, said, "Club officials allowed us to play even though they locked the main gate."

RAB LINK TO CRIMES

### Mozena calls for credible probe

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

US Ambassador to Dhaka Dan W Mozena yesterday urged the government to conduct "thorough, timely and credible investigations" into alleged abuses by the Rapid Action Battalion personnel.

Referring to the seven murders in Narayanganj last month, he said every Bangladeshi knows the recent events have cast a dark shadow on the elite force.

Ensuring accountability of the law enforcers is now more important than ever in light of the alleged incidents of abuse of power, the envoy added.

He was speaking at a certificate giving ceremony organised on completion of an eight-week intensive training of 23 Rab personnel on how to carry out investigations.

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# Knee op puts Suarez in WC doubt

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Earlier, in the first official statement to come out of the Uruguayan camp after news leaked that Suarez would require an operation, the AUF indicated that the player had "suffered an intense pain in his left knee" in training on Wednesday morning.

It was therefore decided that he should undergo "arthroscopic surgery to repair meniscus damage".

The statement added that "no other damage to the knee was spotted" but the AUF pointed out that the 27-year-old took a knock to the same knee playing for Liverpool against Newcastle United on the final day of the Premier League season on May 11.

Suarez's mother Sandra Diaz told local media that he would be released from hospital around lunchtime on Thursday.

He now faces a race against time to be ready for Uruguay's World Cup campaign, which begins in a little over three weeks against Costa Rica in the northern Brazilian city of Fortaleza.

The AUF's statement confirmed an earlier report by leading television journalist Martin Charquero, who wrote on Twitter that Suarez had "felt pain in training" before an MRI scan detected a meniscus problem.

Suarez was the top scorer in the anxious to start training with his Premier League in the season just finished with 31 goals and won both the PFA Players' Player of the Year and the English Football Writers' Association Player of the Year prizes.

be keeping a close eye on develop-

Experts said it could take anything from two to six weeks to recover from the keyhole surgery, but the AUF are remaining optimistic.

News of the injury generated widespread reaction on Twitter, with the former president of the AUF, Sebastian Bauza, writing: "STRENGTH LUIS!! Everyone in Uruguay is confident that you will recover!!!"

Uruguay, the 2011 Copa America winners, are hoping to be able to pair Suarez with Paris Saint-Germain's Edinson Cavani in attack as they prepare to come up against England and Italy as well as Costa Rica in Group Suarez was the top scorer in the

South American World Cup qualifying group with 11 goals, although Uruguay only finished fifth and needed a play-off against Jordan to reach the finals.

Uruguayan capital on Tuesday to join the squad, but insisted he was

teammates.

He enjoyed a stunning comeback in the 2013-14 Premier League campaign after his reputation plummeted for racially abusing Manchester His club Liverpool will therefore United's Patrice Evra and then biting Chelsea's Branislav Ivanovic in the previous season.

> Suarez's goals helped Liverpool finish second in the Premier League behind eventual champions Manchester City. After playing Costa Rica on June

14, the two-time world champions face England in Sao Paulo on June 19 and then Italy in Natal five days later. Before the finals get underway, Uruguay have two World Cup warm-

up matches scheduled, against Northern Ireland on May 30 and Slovenia on June 4, with both games to be held in Montevideo. Suarez is the second South

American star battling to be ready for the World Cup. Colombian striker Radamel

Falcao damaged cruciate ligaments in January while playing for his club side Monaco in the French Cup and is in a race against time to recover.

Falcao said on Sunday he was still Suarez only arrived in the not sure whether he would be ready.

All 32 teams have to announce their final 23-man squads by June 2.

# Army takes over

FROM PAGE 1

supporters of ousted former premier Thaksin Shinawatra and opponents backed by the royalist establishment that has polarised the country and battered its economy.

"In order for the situation to return to normal quickly and for society to love and be at peace again ... and to reform the political, economic and social structure, the military needs to take control of power," Prayuth said in the televised address.

The general made his broadcast after a meeting to which he had summoned the rival factions in Thailand's drawn-out political conflict, with the aim of finding a compromise to end six months of anti-government

protests. But no progress was made and Prayuth wound up the gathering by announcing he was seizing power,

according to a participant. The Thai armed forces have a long history of intervening in politics - there

attempted coups since the country became a constitutional monarchy in 1932, most recently when Thaksin was material on social media. deposed in 2006.

meeting at Bangkok's Army Club shortly before the coup announcement and troops took away Suthen killed and 700 injured since the antiment but a pro-Thaksin activist in his their entrenched positions on Thaugsuban, leader of the protests government protests erupted late last hometown of Chiang Mai said there against the pro-Thaksin government.

Some of the other meeting participants were being held back in the venue afterwards, said a Reuters reporter waiting outside.

The army ordered rival protest camps to break up and soldiers fired into the air to disperse thousands of progovernment "red shirt" activists gathered in Bangkok's western outskirts. The military detained at least one leader of the activists, said a spokesman for the

group, Thanawut Wichaidit. The protesters later left peacefully.

The army also ordered television and radio stations to halt normal programmes and only broadcast its more than five people. Earlier, it warned people not to spread inflammatory

The army had declared martial law Hundreds of soldiers surrounded the on Tuesday, saying it was necessary to prevent violence.

Twenty-eight people have been

"Martial law may have been to test the waters, the army gave the opposing camps a chance to negotiate a way out

but I think the endgame was always the military taking over," said Kan Yuanyong of the Siam Intelligence Unit think-tank. "The possibility of conflict is now

much higher," he said. "Thaksin will fight back."

Former telecommunications tycoon ment" and warned tourists to be careful. Thaksin has lived in self-exile since 2008 to avoid a jail term for graft, but still commands the loyalty of legions of rural and urban poor and exerts a huge influence over politics, most recently

Yingluck Shinawatra.

Yingluck was forced to step down as premier by a court two weeks ago, but her caretaker government, buffeted by six months of protests against it, had remained nominally in power.

Thaksin was not available for comwas no immediate plan to protest.

Some of Thailand's neighbours were dismayed, and there was widespread international condemnation, including from France and the United Nations human rights office.

Japan said the coup was regrettable and it called for a swift restoration of democracy. Australian Foreign Minister Julie Bishop said she was "gravely concerned" by the "regrettable develop-

Britain expressed concern over the coup and urged all sides to work together, but stopped short of condemning the seizure of power by the military.

In a first round of talks on

Wednesday, Prayuth had called on the two sides to agree on a compromise that would have hinged around the appointment of an interim prime minister, political reforms and the timing of an election.

But neither side backed down from Wednesday and again yesterday, participants said.

Outgoing government officials were not available for comment after the

The anti-government protesters want to rid the country of the influence of Thaksin, who they say is a corrupt crony capitalist who commandeered a fragile democracy and used taxpayers' money to buy votes with populist giveaways.

They wanted a "neutral" interim prime minister to oversee electoral reforms before any new vote.

The government and its supporters said a general election was the best way forward and it had proposed polls on Aug. 3, to be followed by reforms. It would probably win such a vote.

### have been 18 previous successful or material, and banned gatherings of through a government run by his sister, 2 ex-Rab men now accused

FROM PAGE 1 and his driver Ibrahim were kidnapped separately. Later, their bodies were found floating in the

Shitalakkhya. The two former Rab officers were sent on forced retirements for their alleged involvement in the abduction and killing of the seven people.

Yesterday, they were placed on an eight-day fresh remand each by a Narayanganj court for interrogation on completion of their five day

Local lawyers yesterday assaulted their lawyer who had travelled to Narayanganj from Dhaka to defend

for proper investigation and patience from all. He said preventing them from getting legal services would hurt them and obstruct justice from being delivered.

Meanwhile, police headquarters will seek the help of Interpol to arrest the prime suspect in the murder case, Nur Hossain, who is reportedly hiding in India.

"We are going to ask for help soon," Assistant Inspector General Mahbubur Rahman Bhuiyan told The Daily Star, adding that Narayanganj police had requested

them to get Interpol involved. Interpol had issued a red alert for the arrest of Nur Hossain during the caretaker regime in 2007. Ward councillor and Siddhirganj Awami League leader Nur was on the run and wanted in more than a dozen cases,

including murder cases. Nur became a notorious criminal in Siddhirganj with the alleged blessing of Narayanganj Awami League leader Shamim Osman. He returned to Siddhirganj after the Awami League assumed power in

The Interpol red alert for his arrest was withdrawn following a request from Bangladesh police. Sources in In court, suspect Tareque called the police department say that the and police claim that they had request to Interpol to withdraw the alert was made following instructions from an influential Awami League leader.

> Nur in 2011 was elected ward councillor of Narayanganj City be produced before a court within Corporation.

Police on May 18 arrested another suspect, ex-Rab officer Lt Commander (retd) SM Masud Rana, at Dhaka Cantonment under Section 54. He too is being kept at the Narayanganj police lines as Tareque and Arif are and is being interrogated on a seven-day remand.

The three Rab officers were arrested following a High Court

Shahidul Islam, father-in-law or Nazrul Islam, had alleged that some officials of Rab-11 killed Nazrul in exchange for Tk 6 crore from Nur Hossain and his accomplices.

In his reaction to their arrest and their being placed on remand Shahid said placing the ex-Rab officials on remand was not enough and that the trio should be treated like others accused of murder.

The police have not been able to arrest any of the six accused in the murder case. Even though the home ministry

arrested Hasmat Ali Hashu in connection with the murder a week ago, he was yet to be produced before a An arrested person is supposed to

24 hours. Meanwhile, at the Narayanganj

Circuit House, Rab personnel Kamal Uddin, policemen Omar Farukh and Rafiq and two eyewitnesses testified before the committee of public administration ministry set up to investigate the murder.

# Woman narrates killing

FROM PAGE 20 village under Ishwardi upazila said her husband was a leader of Awami League and Swadhinata Sangram Parishad, a pro-

liberation platform, in 1971. "I used to keep the arms of freedom fighters and cook for them during the Liberation War, she told the court.

The witness said Subhan along with the Pakistani army had entered their Sahapur village spraying bullets in the morning of May She added they heard gunshots around 7:00am and the news that the house of Tayabur

Rahman, the then principal of Ishwardi

College, had been burned down. They including her husband, her parents-in-law and Shamsul Haque hid in a bamboo orchard behind their house, she said. army besieged us. As the army attempted to shoot my husband after Moulana Subhan had

introduced him to them, I pleaded for his life

touching Subhan's feet, but he kicked me off,"

said emotion-chocked Jahanara. The Pakistani army first shot her husband and then Shamsul, she added.

Jahanara said she had also heard the Pakistani army had killed their neighbours Rahim Sarder and Mahmud Sarder and villagers Chand Ali Pramanik, Akhter Pramanik, Anar Pramanik and Haresuddin after Subhan had identified them that day.

She said her brothers had taken her husband's body to her father's house and

buried him there.

Subhan's lawyer Shahjahan Kabir asked three questions before the three-member tribunal led by Justice Obaidul Hassan with members Justice Md Mozibur Rahman Miah and Justice Md Shahinur Islam adjourned the proceedings until Sunday.

#### CONTEMPT PETITION AGAINST KALER KANTHO

The International Crimes Tribunal-1 has meanwhile adjourned until May 28 hearing of a contempt petition filed against a reporter, the editor and publisher of bangle daily Kaler Kantho by the prosecution for a report headlined "Odokkho prosecutioner kormokando druto bichar shesh korte badha [unskilled prosecution hinder speedy trial]" published on May 11, 2014.

Prosecutor Mohammad Ali told the "But Moulana Subhan and the Pakistani tribunal that the report 'maligned' him and created 'obstruction' to the proceedings of the Asked by the tribunal to explain, he said

> both the prosecution and the defence were officers of the court, adding, since the report had 'maligned' him, it had also harmed the tribunal's reputation. The tribunal suggested that it would be wise

> if any other prosecutor had taken part in the hearing since the report was on Ali's activities. Ali told the tribunal that senior prosecutor

Syed Haider Ali was supposed to place arguments on his behalf but suddenly fell sick. He sought time for argument by Haider Ali and the tribunal fixed the date and said it would

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