

Mosharraf seeks Ashraf's help

Takes charge of LGRD ministry

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Khandker Mosharraf Hossain took charge of the LGRD and cooperatives ministry yesterday after meeting his predecessor Syed Ashraful Islam.

Mosharraf, also expatriates' welfare minister, went to Ashraf's Bailey Road residence at 11:05am, and had a 15-minute meeting with him. He sought Ashraf's help in discharging his new responsibilities, and Ashraf assured him of full cooperation.

After the meeting, Ashraf, general secretary of the ruling Awami League, talked to reporters.

Terming Mosharraf a gentleman, he said, "We are from the same party, and are members of the same parliament and the cabinet. Our cooperation will continue."

On July 9, Ashraf was made a minister without portfolio after Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina had removed him from the LGRD ministry.

Mosharraf, father-in-law of Hasina's daughter Saima Wazed Putul, was given charge of the ministry as an additional duty. He will continue to serve as the

expatriates' welfare and overseas employment minister.

On his first day in office as the LGRD minister, Mosharraf told reporters that he was "feeling lucky" that the PM had chosen him for the job.

Mosharraf promised to work towards materialising the PM's vision to turn Bangladesh into a middle-income country by 2021 and a developed one by 2041.

"But it will not be possible without development of rural areas, as about 80-82 percent people live there," he said at the Secretariat in the afternoon.

Responding to a query on his meeting with Ashraf, he said, "Syed Ashraf is the general secretary of my party. I met him and sought his assistance today before taking the helm of the ministry".

About his work plan, Mosharraf said he would focus on improving the existing road networks under the Local Government Engineering Division. He would also work to ensure that people in rural areas get services of the Rural Development and Cooperatives



Thanchi-Alikadam road in Dim Pahar area of Bandarban is about 2,500 feet above sea level. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will inaugurate the pass, the highest in Bangladesh, through a video conference tomorrow.

PHOTO: STAR

36 ENCLAVES IN PANCHAGARH

405 seek to be Indian citizens

QUAMRUL ISLAM RUBAIYAT, Thakurgaon

As many as 405 inhabitants in the 36 Indian enclaves inside Panchagarh got registered with a joint survey team to become Indian nationals in the last six days.

Of the enclaves, seven are in Panchagarh Sadar upazila, 23 in Boda upazila and six in Debiganj upazila, said Executive Magistrate Shahin Reza, in-charge of the control room set up at the Panchagarh deputy commissioner's office for the survey.

This correspondent talked to many of those enclave inhabitants recently.

Farmer Dijen Barman is one of them. The 38-year-old lives with his family in Grarati enclave inside Sadar upazila.

He said although he along with his wife and children was registered with the survey team to become Indians, his parents and other family members want Bangladeshi citizenship.

Vanu Ram, 35, a farmer of Shalbari, an Indian enclave inside Boda upazila, said he and three others of his family had a desire to become Indian national and they got their names enlisted accordingly.

"Our relatives are in India. So we want to become Indian nationals," he said.

Meanwhile, 14 people of a Hindu community who had earlier registered with the survey team to be Indian nationals at Garati enclave now wish to change their decision, said Shyamal Kumar Dey, an Indian supervisor of the survey team.

"But we have no authority to delete their names from the list as they have already filled up the forms," he told this correspondent.

The case with Dulal Chandra, 22, of the same enclave, is similar to that of the 14.

"All our relatives live in Bangladesh and if we go there [India], it would be difficult for us to adjust there," Dulal said.

Sandip Mitra, assistant high commissioner, Assistant High

Commission of India, Rajshahi, said as per the survey rules, no one can change their choice once it is registered with the survey team.

He made the comment while talking to reporters after a visit to the enclaves in the three upazilas.

"But, we will inform our higher authorities about the matter and they will decide on it," he said.

According to the control room set up at Panchagarh deputy commissioner's office, as many as 1,109 children have registered their names with the survey team in the last six days to be included in the survey.

The children were born after the joint enclave census in 162 Indo-Bangla enclaves in July 2011, said Executive Magistrate Shahin Reza.

Besides, 445 more people were also enlisted as survey participants. They were married to the enclave inhabitants after that year.

The joint census found that 37,334 people live in Indian enclaves in Bangladesh and 14,215 people in Bangladeshi enclaves in India.

On Monday, Bangladesh and India launched the 10-day joint survey in the 162 enclaves to know the choice of citizenship of those living there.

CONFUSED OVER CHOICE
A number of inhabitants of Indian enclaves in Lalmonirhat said they were still confused over their choice of nationality, reports our district correspondent S Dilip Roy.

"We are still discussing our choice as some of our family members are wishing to become Indian nationals," said Sankoshi Rani Rabidas, 65, a widow at Indian enclave Bhitarkuti which is inside Lalmonirhat Sadar Upazila.

"We have a lot of relatives in this country [Bangladesh]," she said, adding that she wants to be a Bangladeshi national.

The survey team officials working at different enclaves inside the district said there were many cases where family members were coming up with different choice of their citizenship.

Bangladeshi shot dead by 'BSF'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Police recovered the body of a Bangladeshi cattle trader from Kushkhali border in Satkhira on Saturday night, 19 hours after he had been gunned down allegedly by BSF men.

The deceased was identified as Mukul Sarder, 35, of Hawalkhali village in the district.

Preferring anonymity, two villagers said Mukul and other traders crossed the border to fetch some cattle from India on Friday afternoon.

They were returning to Bangladesh along with the cattle early on Saturday. When they reached near Dubli field area around 4:00am, BSF members of Khalsa camp opened fire on them, they said.

Mukul died of bullet wounds on the spot. Later, fellow traders brought his body to the Bangladesh territory, they added.

As the death news spread, police and Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) members searched the border area in vain to find the body throughout Saturday morning.

Following information from locals, police recovered the body of Mukul from Badhilki bill area in Sadar upazila around 11:00pm, Emdadul Haque Sheikh, OC of Satkhira Sadar Police Station, said.

The decomposing body was wrapped in a mat made of date leaves and it bore bullet injury mark in the abdomen, he said, adding that it was sent to Satkhira Sadar Hospital morgue for an autopsy.

Commanding officer of BGB-38 Battalion Major Najir Ahmed Bakshi said the body bore a bullet injury mark.

The Indian Border Security Force (BSF) authorities informed the BGB that no such incident took place inside the Indian territory.

Abdul Khaleque, father-in-law of the deceased, said Mukul was involved in cattle trade. But they did not know when he had gone inside the Indian territory, he added.

FAKE BAIL ORDERS

Court staff arrested

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Police yesterday arrested a bench assistant of Dhaka Second Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court for allegedly issuing fake bail orders.

All the accused of 70 criminal cases, pending with the court, were released from prison following the fake bail orders.

Kotwali police arrested Md Moslehuddin around 3:30pm at the court premises after Obaidul Karim Akondo, an official of the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court, filed a case in this connection.

Apart from Moslehuddin, Sheikh Md Naim, an MLSS of Dhaka Second Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court, was also made accused in the case.

But Naim managed to run away

sensing police presence in the court premises, Obaidul told The Daily Star.

Obaidul also said he had filed the case upon receiving an order from Metropolitan Sessions Judge Kamrul Hossain Mollah yesterday.

The order came hours after Shamsunnahar Begum, a judge of the Second Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court, lodged a complaint with her superior.

In her complaint, Shamsunnahar mentioned that she had launched an internal inquiry and found that all the accused of 70 cases were released on fake bail orders.

The fake orders were prepared by her court staff Moslehuddin and Naim, Obaidul added.

A case of cheating has been registered against Moslehuddin, said Abul Hasan, officer-in-charge of Kotwali police.

Eurozone lists tough conditions for Greek debt deal

AFP, Brussels

Greece must start to implement tough reforms as early as next week in exchange for a bailout to keep it in the euro, according to proposals drawn up by finance ministers for a eurozone summit yesterday.

The resumed talks early yesterday amid sharp differences over how much to demand of Athens, after nine hours' wrangling on Saturday failed to produce an agreement.

"We have finalised our discussions. We have come a long way but a couple of big issues are still open," said Jeroen Dijsselbloem, head of the 19-nation eurozone finance ministers' group.

"We are going to give those to the leaders, so it is up to them," Dijsselbloem said, without giving further details.

Savage

FROM PAGE 1

Sylhet. Locals formed a human chain near his house yesterday, demanding maximum punishment to the murderers.

"I have never seen such brutality in my 57 years' life," said one of the protesters. Another local said, "The boy cried for water, but they kept beating him."

Several hundred women and children joined the demonstration with photographs of the incident and killers.

Police filed a murder case, accusing Muhit and his brother Kamrul Islam, 24, their accomplice Ali Haider, 34, and watchman Moyna Mia alias Boro Moyna, 45, said Officer-in-Charge Akter Hossain of Jalalabad Police Station.

Muhit was produced before to the Metropolitan Magistrate's Court with a seven-day remand prayer, the OC said, adding that the hearing on the remand prayer will be held today.

Lubna Akter, mother of the victim, said Rajon went out of the house in the morning.

As he did not return home till night, she went to the police station to lodge a general diary. There, she heard about the recovery of the body of a boy and later identified her son.

"My son is not a thief and locals knew him well. They killed my innocent son. I want justice," she said.

'A GLASS OF WATER'

The video footage showed appearances of three people, but conversation of at least four people were heard. Rajon's hands were tied to a pole.

One of the men wearing black T-shirt and lungi is seen beating Rajon with a stick and asking who else were involved in the "theft".

"Tell us your name, we would beat you lightly," said the man, identified as Muhit's brother Kamrul, a Saudi expatriate who came to Sylhet a month ago for Eid. He and his brothers live at Sheikh Para near the bus stand.

Rajon replied: "Don't beat me mama [uncle] with this. My bones will break." Yet the man kept beating the kid in the legs, hands and shoulders.

Then they untied him and made him walk. They were heard saying his bones are "fine".

Kamrul was hitting the boy in the sole of his foot and joints of his legs with the stick, asking repeatedly: "Tell me your name."

They tied him again to a pole, this time only his left hand, and started beating. At

one point, Rajon said, "I am happy with the beating."

Then someone replied: "If he is happy with this, then beat him more, he will be doubly happy."

The men were speaking in Sylheti colloquial language and bursting into laughter frequently. As Rajon fell to the ground, one of them said "hit him again."

Kamrul was again seen hitting him in the head. He was seen beating the boy most of the time.

Rajon screamed: "I will never do this in life my again." As he said he could not stand up, one man shouted: "Stand up."

When the torture was going on, one of them asked if the incident was being filmed. Another voice heard saying: "We will upload it on Facebook. The world will see it."

Being tortured for quite a while, the boy sought water. "Give me some water." Kamrul asked Rajon to drink own sweat while another said, jokingly, if he wanted Tiger, an energy drink, or beer.

Rajon replied: "I want a glass of water."

[Our Moulvibazar correspondent Mintu Deshwar contributed to this report]

Turnaround Tigers-way

FROM PAGE 1

Bangladesh's World Cup hero Mahmudullah Riyad might have scored a duck upon his return from a finger injury in the first game, but the right-hander more than made up for it with a composed 50 in hostile conditions.

It was a match in which the Tigers needed to solve a puzzle of what type of wicket they required to fire in every department. And in the end it was proved that they needed a sporty wicket not only to excel but also to end a long wait of defeating the mighty Proteas.

It was Bangladesh's second win against South Africa after their famous 67-run victory in the 2007 World Cup in Guyana. But this win has a special meaning as in this match they not only bowled their opponents to their lowest score against them, but also dominated their opposition right from the word go.

It was a match where South Africa captain Hashim Amla hardly found anything other than winning the toss going their way.

If anybody wants to know how well the Tigers bowled yesterday, it's better to find the biggest partnership in the visitors' innings,

which was a mere 29, for the second wicket.

There was a debate on whether Bangladesh would be able to handle South Africa's pace attack on a responsive wicket, and it was quickly buried by the youthful pacer and wily spinners. The Tigers have over the years showed that they love to play their shots and it was quite evident in the World Cup down under.

But what the bowlers did yesterday can only be compared with military drill at the famous Tiananmen Square in China. The moment young pace bowler Mustafizur Rahman, a magnificent find for the Tigers, had Quinton de Kock with a perfect short ball, the hosts with their tail up, irrevocably pressed the panic button for a team dubbed as a choker. It may be an overstatement but the fact is that on a wicket, which was a paradise for a stroke-maker, they went into a shell from where they never came out once Amla was clean bowled by Rubel Hossain. And then there was a moment when a comedy of errors saw their confused fielders dropping a sitter at mid-on.

Mustafizur finished with three wickets and gave ample evidence that he is increasingly becoming an

asset for Bangladesh. But there was one special effort from a busy cricketer. Almost thrown into oblivion after a series of bad performances, Nasir Hossain's return to form, and that too with the ball, was a special treat for the home fans. He has not only claimed three wickets, but made his strong presence felt in an overall eye-pleasing display of fielding by the Tigers.

And yesterday their fielding effort was even better than that of South Africa, who are regarded as a benchmark in this art for a long time.

If a captain can inspire others, then Mashrafe Bin Mortaza showed how inspirational one can be. He did not bowl that many overs, but the way he rotated his bowlers with aplomb and set his field was something to behold. He may limp on his bad legs, but his commitment and aggression is the driving force behind the Tigers, who have now made it a habit of felling one frontier after another under his stewardship.

There might be a tinge of disappointment the way Tamim Iqbal threw his wicket away. But he can be excused on a day the Tigers have hardly put a foot wrong in a never-seen-before turnaround.

An ominous sign in politics

FROM PAGE 1

while Fakhrul -- Ashraf's counterpart in rival BNP -- is under arrest since January 5. No general secretary of either party has ever remained detained for so long since 1991. Languishing in jail since then, he has been struggling to get bails.

Firstly, take the case of Ashraf. None of the general secretaries of any party in power had faced such a situation in the past.

Even worse, after his removal from the ministerial job, it is questionable if he can complete his general secretary tenure that ends in December.

Media reports say some senior ministers of the government worked long to convince Hasina to remove Ashraf from his job.

Ashraf's inactivity as minister and the party's general secretary seems to have helped his political foes to press with their agenda.

The general secretary of the ruling party is now a minister without portfolio. This means Ashraf still gets all state facilities as a minister but does not have any work to do. Nothing can be more uncomfortable for Ashraf, who is reputed to be an honest and dignified politician.

In the meantime, much before

Ashraf's downfall, Fakhrul's fortune took a turn for the worse.

Ninety criminal cases have been slapped on him in connection with street violence during BNP's January to April agitation against the government. He has been charged with planning and instigating the violence, torching vehicles and other offences.

Since 2012, Fakhrul has been behind bars several times and he got out on bails, but not this time.

Filing politically motivated cases against opponents is nothing new, at least in Bangladesh. But the arrest of Fakhrul in 2012 was a surprise. No politician of his stature from the two rival parties -- AL and BNP -- had to face a situation like this over the last two decades.

Whenever they were in power in turn since 1991, each of the two parties used cases and arrests of senior and mid-level opposition leaders to suppress anti-government movements.

The rule of the game was--none would arrest each other's president and secretary general, the top two leaders.

Even when the then BNP-led government launched a crackdown on the opposition in 2004, it did not arrest AL general secretary Abdul Jalil, who had

famously given the April 30 deadline for the fall of the BNP government.

But things look different with the arrest of Fakhrul this time.

However his fate may be compared with the situation that prevailed during the army-backed caretaker government when the emergency regime had launched a crackdown on politicians.

During the emergency rule, AL chief Sheikh Hasina and Jalil were arrested and put behind bars. BNP chief Khaleda Zia also was locked away while her party's secretary general Khandaker Delwar Hossain, though not arrested, had to undergo harassment.

But Ashraf and Fakhrul's treatment during a democratic period is worrisome. It gives a wrong signal to other politicians who have clean images. The prevailing situation also shows that there is a complete lack of tolerance and decency in the country's politics.

This would be encouraging the confrontational political culture.

The humiliation and sufferings of Ashraf and Fakhrul are ominous sign in the country's politics. How can healthy politics shape up in this country with examples like this?