

Quader, Fakhrul

FROM PAGE 16
secretary of the Awami League leader, quoted Quader, also the road transport and bridges minister, as saying.

Quader further said: "I was waiting for you at Dhaka airport. But, I heard that you were not coming. It would be good if we could come together and talk."

Responding to Quader's remarks, Fakhrul said he had to change schedule for family affairs.

"Our paths can be different in politics, but there can be a formal relation between us. As we do politics, the path of talks should remain open," Quader was quoted as saying.

Both the top leaders of AL and BNP were scheduled to reach Saidpur on the same flight, but Fakhrul later cancelled his schedule.

During his visit to Rangpur, Obaidul Quader said the communal attacks on Ramu, Nasirnagar and Thakurpara were parts of the same sequence of a conspiracy to destroy the close relations between Bangladesh and India.

The Hindus, who are majority in the village, came under attack on November 10.

"It is a Facebook post. The attack on the Hindus of Thakurpara was not an isolated incident, the nature of the attack was similar to that of Ramu in Cox's Bazar and Nasirnagar in Brahmanbaria," he said.

He alleged a political party is trying to destroy the relations between Bangladesh and India and destabilise the country ahead of upcoming national election.

But, the government would prevent

any such attempts with an iron hand, he said, adding that everybody involved in the attacks would be arrested and brought to justice.

The minister also assured the Hindus of the village of all-out security measures for their protection.

Later, he gave Tk 25,000 to 11 families each whose houses were burned and Tk 10,000 to those whose houses were damaged.

Jahangir Kabir Nanak, joint secre-

tant for different terms when police produced them before the court with 10-day remand prayer for each.

The court granted four days each for Mawlana Sirajul Islam, Zillur Rahman and Aminul Islam and one day for Rashidul Islam and Abdul Alim.

Hundreds of agitating Muslims were brought together in Khaleya Shah Bazar and Paglapir areas in Rangpur Sadar on November 10 following a



tary, AL, Khalid Mahmud Chowdhury, organisational secretary, AL, and Rana Dasgupta, general secretary of Bangladesh Hindu, Buddhist, Christian Oikya Parishad, among others, accompanied the minister.

A Rangpur court has meanwhile granted remand to five accused in connection with the attack.

The Court of Senior Judicial Magistrate Tariq Hossain granted the

hate campaign that Hindus were demeaning Islam.

The mob attacked the Hindus in that afternoon, burning 11 houses and damaging nine others.

One person was killed and 20 others were hurt when police opened fire to disperse the unruly people.

The police have so far arrested 170 people including three Union Parishad chairmen of Monimpur union.

'Business partner behind kidnap'

FROM PAGE 1
RMM Sweater Ltd -- are worth around Tk 150 crore, he mentioned.

However, Mohiuddin, who claimed to be the founding chairman of the three firms, said he was not involved in Aniruddha's abduction, and refuted all the allegations against him.

"I am the founding chairman of all the three firms. The accusations made against me are completely baseless, fabricated and motivated. All this has been done to harass me socially," said Mohiuddin, also chairman of Bangladesh Finished Leather, Leather goods and Footwear Exporters Association (BFLLEA).

Mystery still shrouds Aniruddha's abduction as a number of BFLLEA leaders believe Aniruddha's rivalry with Mohiuddin wasn't so intense that he would abduct him. They further said Aniruddha is hiding something about the abductors.

After keeping him confined to an unknown location for 81 days, the kidnappers dropped him off near his Gulshan home around 3:30am on Friday.

Talking to this newspaper over the phone yesterday, Aniruddha said his abductors didn't blindfold him while he was whisked away from Gulshan in a microbus.

He couldn't see anything outside as the vehicle had tinted glasses, and he

was asked to keep his head down.

The businessman further said he had no idea where he was taken.

"I feared that I wouldn't be able to see the world again, breathe again."

He couldn't say how long it took to reach the room on the first floor of a two-storey building where he was kept.

"Can you feel anything when the fear of death grips you?" he questioned.

In reply to a query, Aniruddha said the abductors often came to the room without covering their faces. They behaved well and gave him food regularly.

Contacted, Assistant Commissioner of Gulshan Zone of Dhaka Metropolitan Police Rafiqul Islam said they talked to Aniruddha but he couldn't say anything specific about the abductors.

Asked about Aniruddha's allegations against his business partner, Rafiqul said he was unaware of it.

He, however, said they would look into the matter.

Giving an account of his abduction on August 27, Aniruddha said that soon after he emerged from a meeting at Union Bank in Gulshan 1, a man greeted him and wanted to know his identity.

On confirmation of his identity, the man along with six to seven others forced him into a microbus. They all

seemed to be professionals, he added.

The incident was captured on a CCTV camera. But surprisingly, law enforcers could not trace the kidnappers even in the last 81 days.

"Their main target was to ruin my business by keeping me confined for a long period.

"The firearms they carried might be dummies. But it's very alarming that they have the capacity to abduct someone from a place like Gulshan," he said.

In his statement, Aniruddha alleged that during his absence, his business partner had tried to harm his ventures in many ways such as deposition of Tk 5 crore in his personal bank account instead of the company's account and removal of important documents from his office room.

"As chairman of the BFLLEA, Mohiuddin also tried to impede the approval of a shipment certificate for one of my firms."

"After abducting me, they [the kidnappers] had pressed me to give information about all my properties," Aniruddha alleged.

He urged the prime minister to intervene and take steps so that he gets justice and security.

The statement signed by Aniruddha was issued from his office at Bangla Motor in the city yesterday morning.

and lauded the women empowerment in Bangladesh.

PM's Adviser Gowher Rizvi, Principal Secretary Kamal Naser Chowdhury, Senator Richard Durban, Congressman David Cicilline, Congresswoman Betty McCollum, and Jan Schakowsky, US Ambassador to Bangladesh Marcia S Bernicat, among others, were present.

Later, another delegation of the UK, led by Sophie the Countess of Wessex, met Hasina.

After the meeting, the press secretary said the delegation put emphasis on the continuation of diplomatic efforts to stop the influx of Rohingyas.

The UK also wants Rohingyas return to their country.

Hasina said the entire administra-

tion, including the police, BGB, the Army and Navy, volunteers were working round the clock to mitigate the sufferings of the Rohingyas.

She also thanked the British government for its assistance to the Rohingyas.

The US Senate delegation also met with Foreign Minister AH Mahmood Ali at a city hotel on Saturday.

Senator Jeff Markley told the minister that they were looking forward to the successful repatriation of the Rohingyas to Myanmar, says a foreign ministry press release.

Mohamud Ali deeply appreciated their visit to Cox's Bazar and apprised that he hopes to sign an agreement on repatriation of Rohingyas during his forthcoming visit to Myanmar.

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"It is absolutely in her interest for this government to come into being, because failure would spell her end," he told the Phoenix news channel.

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