

January 30, 2005

We are saddened and distressed that the tragedy of my father's assassination is being used by the BNP-Jamaat Government to spread more lies. It is therefore important to set the record straight on a few key issues.

1. The Prime Minister has apparently made a statement that she requested permission to visit us but did not receive any response. No permission is required to visit a bereaved family, but in any case we did not know of any such request. Much more important than any such gesture and a few meaningless phrases would be real action on her part to bring my father's killers to justice. If she did this there would be no need to come to us – we would ourselves go to her office to thank her.
2. My father might have lived if he had been transported to Dhaka by helicopter or if he had been given treatment at the Government medical facilities or even if he had been sent a properly-equipped ambulance. He was denied these facilities. The reasons for these failures should be within the purview of any serious investigation.
3. The Speaker Mr. Sircar has failed to accurately report to the press what my mother said to him on the telephone. He seemed preoccupied with the convention of holding a Janaaza on the South Plaza of the Sangsad Bhavan. My mother asked him why he failed in his much more significant duties of ensuring the security of Members of Parliament such as my father, arranging medical treatment or helicopter transportation to Dhaka. He made no attempt to visit BIRDEM hospital, where my father was taken, or attend his Janaaza. It is very sad Mr. Sircar appears to regard his position as that of the Speaker of the BNP.
4. The past record of the BNP and the BNP-Jamaat regimes with regard to investigations of past attacks on the Awami League do not give us any confidence in their capability or interest in finding my father's killers. It has not escaped anyone's attention that the target of the bomb attacks is the Awami League. Each investigation appears to fizzle out – the killing of my father's colleagues Ahsanullah Master and Ivy Rahman and many others have gone unpunished. The Government's inadequate response to the carefully orchestrated attack of August 21 on Sheikh Hasina is another sign of its ill-intent or at the very least, gross incompetence.
5. The Government has reportedly agreed to an international investigation of my father's assassination. Any such investigation should be genuinely independent with no participation by any Government agency in its management or supervision. The Government should cooperate when requested, and any report

should be made available in its entirety to the public. We have no confidence in a government-supervised “joint” investigation.

6. My father wrote the original position paper that led to SAARC. We feel that at this time it is inappropriate to hold such a summit meeting, hosted by a “failed government” led by a group of people who have lost the moral authority to govern this country.
7. There have been street protests all over the country, some of them violent. I would urge restraint to all those who respected my father and knew his commitment to peaceful democratic processes. Of course the Government has left the people of this country no other forum to express their opposition to its policies. It is shameful that MPs of the opposition are not even allowed to speak freely in Parliament.
8. There are good and patriotic people in every public institution and agency of the State, as well as every area of private endeavor. We would like to say to them, “The time has come to take a stand”. They know that their ultimate loyalties lie with this great country of ours, and not any group of unprincipled individuals who have captured power.
9. This latest attack on my father goes beyond the world of politics. No one is safe under this Government – and there is real fear in every house. Public interest in such incidents tends to wane after a few months, but the people of this country must now realize the terrible price of inaction.

Dr. Reza Kibria