

Sylhet magnate untraced for over 10 months

No headway in investigation for 'mysterious' police role

IQBAL SIDDIQUEE, Sylhet

Law enforcers have failed to trace whereabouts of Sylhet magnate Md. Habibur Rahman, 'missing' for over 10 months.

Different trade bodies and other organisations including the Chamber and ruling BNP on several times demanded rescue of the businessman, but to no effect.

Police officials repeatedly claimed 'significant progress' in investigation but nothing is known yet whether he is alive or not. They can not even say whether he was kidnapped or is missing.

Talking to this correspondent, a police official ruled out the possibility of involvement of any 'criminal gang' in the incident. Family members or relatives might be involvement, he said.

Property-related matter may be the cause, he added while speculating that 'hired gangs' could be involvement in the incident.

He however said the mystery would be unearthed soon. But another police official admitted that the investigation is 'in a mess' as different wings of police department were involved in the investigations.

"I doubt they investigators can make any headway even if they try sincerely because most of the 'alamats' (evidences) got destroyed

with the passage of time and change of investigators".

The case was first investigated by Sylhet Kotwali police. Later, it was handed over to the Detective Branch and then to CID (Criminal Investigation Department), police sources said. Family members of

Habibur Rahman are in doubt rescuing him alive.

Habibur Rahman's 100 year-old father Moulana Abdur Rahim took over his business as his brothers declined to look after his business fearing police harassment, family sources said. "I had to take over the business about a month after my

son's disappearance as my other sons declined apprehending police harassment".

On November 8 last year, Tipu Sultana Begum, first wife of Habibur, received a letter by post which asked for sending Tk 18 lakh to a filling station at Islampur Dholai in Companyganj upazila on November 11, where a person wearing white pajama and panjapi will be waiting for the money. But nobody turned up.

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But they said they are suspicious about driver Manjurul Islam, who was sacked weeks before Habibur Rahman's disappearance.

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Earlier, the two wives of the victim also handed over a memorandum to the DIG to trace out Habibur Rahman. Traders in Sylhet held rallies and observed a half-day strike in the city's wholesale market to press for rescue of the businessman. A human chain was also formed in the city.

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