

They all speak of Limon's

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tutored children of the area and toiled in the fields whenever he was free," she said, adding, "For any parents he is an ideal child."

On the day, Limon was home preparing for his upcoming final exams. Towards the afternoon his mother told him to get the family calf which went astray as high tide flooded the grazing field next to their house. Limon found the calf at a higher point near a small culvert just across the field. Accompanying him was his neighbour 12-year-old Abir. Having found the calf Limon casually sat on the railing of the culvert.

Suddenly, two Rab men appeared on the spot on a motorbike and grabbed Limon by his shirt. They separated Abir and dragged Limon some 15 metres behind banana trees. By then several more Rab personnel arrived on motorbikes.

"One of the Rab men pointed his pistol at Limon's head wanting to know the whereabouts of Mursheed Jamaddar when terrified Limon told him that he was only a student," said Limon's mother, who alerted by the children of the area rushed across the field for her son. "The Rab officer did not ask any other question. He shot Limon point-blank at just above his left knee," she said.

Limon's uncle Mohazzel Hossain, a matchmaker by profession, also rushed to the spot as by then there was a rumour that Limon was shot dead. As he approached the remaining Rab officers and identified himself as Limon's uncle, they severely beat him in front of villagers. Mohazzel sustained eight fractures in his left leg from the beating.

The March 23 incident at an isolated place only five minutes' walk from Limon's home not only left the boy crippled for life but also shattered the dreams of the family aspiring to climb the ladder of success from abject poverty.

Limon's mother Henora Begum, father Tofazzal Hossain struggled hard to educate their two sons Hemayet Hossain Sumon, a BA final year student, Limon Hossain, a HSC student of Accounting Trade and Lucky Akther, a BA student.

While every person in the area, including officials of Rajapur Police Station knew about Limon's innocence, Rab was not sitting idle. Its public relations wing at the time claimed that Limon was with a group of most wanted criminals, including Mursheed Jamaddar. As the elite force raided the area on a tip off, the criminals opened fire. Since Limon was with the criminals, he received the bullet in a crossfire, Rab said.

Rab Deputy Assistant Director Corporal Majharul Islam, Nayek Moktadir Hossain, Nayek Prahalad Chandra, Soldier Kartik Kumar Biswas and Costable Md Abdul Aziz participated in the operation on March 23. They were hell-bent to save

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Jhalakathi and Pirojpur districts. The area is criss-crossed by canals and rivers with thick vegetation on land making it a perfect hideout for criminals.

The gang, led by Mursheed Jamaddar, 40, son of Belayet Jamaddar from Noakhali, has been eluding arrest for years. Mursheed Jamaddar comes from a family locally infamous for its role during the Liberation War in 1971.

Mursheed controls the wholesale trade of Phensidyl and other drugs for the region that, according to police, generate crores of taka for the underground cartel.

Rab could not take chances with criminal Mursheed and his associates. Mursheed is already convicted on various counts of crimes elsewhere in the country and absconding with at least 11 cases against him with Rajapur, Jhalakathi, Kowkhali, Satkhira and Shyamnagar. The cases include murders, armed robbery, extortion, possessing illegal arms, arson and so on.

The other reason for which the Rab personnel opted for extra caution was that their sources had just confirmed spotting Mursheed and his associates by the river

their skin and prove Limon's association with a notorious gang that has been successfully eluding the elite force for years.

Two cases were filed by Rab with Rajapur Police Station accusing Limon of obstructing on-duty law enforcers and possessing firearms. As soon as Limon's story came to light, Rab embarked on recruiting witnesses in the area who would testify against Limon. Capitalising on the situation, petty criminals as well as drug addicts came forward to denounce Limon. With one leg amputated, 16-year-old Limon is now facing the wrath of the law.

Meanwhile, after days of dilly-dally refusal to accept any case from Limon's mother against the Rab men, Rajapur police eventually recorded a case after it was directed by a court of justice. In the case, Limon's mother accused the six Rab personnel of maiming her son.

On Tuesday, Rajapur police got Limon released from Dhaka Pangu hospital and produced him before a senior judicial magistrate in Jhalakathi, 220 kilometers south of the capital. The magistrate sent Limon to jail asking authorities to organise his treatment there. He was later shifted to Barisal Medical College Hospital prison cell.

While Limon was being framed in false cases, a top official of the Rab intelligence arrived at the village on April 12 to investigate the matter. According to Limon's mother and villagers, the official of the enquiry team was so moved by the findings that he offered Limon's mother Tk 5000 as a gesture of goodwill.

"I did not want to accept the money but the Rab official insisted in front of the villagers," said Henora Begum.

Even the Director General of Rab Mokhlesur Rahman on April 11 said Limon Hossain is the victim of a 'shootout' between Rab and criminals. "Limon is a young boy, not a notorious criminal but an accused in a criminal case. He just became the victim of the incident," he said.

The criminal case the Rab DG mentioned was filed following a family feud over land, in which almost all of Limon's family members were accused.

The top level Rab intelligence officer was not alone to sympathise with Limon. The entire staff and students of Limon's college, farmers, villagers, senior citizens, children, traders, leaders of the local government (both Awami League and BNP), and even beggars came forward to help Limon obtain treatment. Students and villagers formed human chains to protest maiming of Limon.

Abu Shahar, about 70 years of age and former Chairman of the area for 20 years, said, "We are happy to see Rab doing an excellent

job but it was a terrible mistake to maim this young man who we all know as a polite and meritorious student coming from an extremely poor family."

Md Nashir Uddin Mahmud, principal of Limon's college told The Daily Star that Limon was an ideal student loved by all the staff. "His attendance in the college was over 90 percent and his class performance was excellent. We never heard of any report of his involvement with any untoward incident. I am deeply shocked for what he went through," said Mahmud.

Atiqur Rahman, training Instructor of the college, Mrinal Kanti Mandal, Shekher Chandra Halder, Mobarak Ali, teachers of the school and college sections, unanimously expressed their sadness at the incident.

The most interesting part of Limon case was that Rajapur police produced charge sheet against Limon and seven absconding others including Mursheed Jamaddar for possessing firearms and obstructing law enforcers.

While the police officers refused to comment on Limon's case on record, unofficially they admitted Limon's innocence. Yet Limon has been put through the grinding process of the state mechanisms.

Limon's sister Lucky Akther said the family had never known luxury. The small house they live in the village is rickety and poorly furnished. Limon's study area included a broken shelf, wobbly chair and table at the corner of an earthen veranda.

"We thought we would be able to start working soon as we finish our studies and bring some joy to the family," said Lucky. "But this incident has shattered our dreams."

A High Court bench yesterday following a bail petition filed by Ain O Salish Kendra, a human rights organisation, granted bail for six months to Limon. The court also directed the government to arrange his treatment at one of the country's best hospitals as per Limon's choice. It also asked the government to bear all the costs for the treatment.

Prof Yunus

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Bangladesh Bank removed the Nobel laureate from the post through a letter on March 2, asking Grameen Bank's board of directors to take steps to that end, Rokanuddin said at a media briefing in his Gulshan residence.

After the SC verdict, now the question is what will be the position of Prof Yunus in Grameen Bank, he said.

A person has to remain in an office out of necessity until a successor is appointed. It is not the case that Prof Yunus has to go right away, he has to hand over the charge to someone, Rokanuddin explained adding that the Bangladesh Bank letter also does not mention that Prof Yunus must leave right away.

He said no legal position operates in a vacuum, and therefore the post of managing director of Grameen also cannot function in a vacuum.

The next board meeting of Grameen Bank will be crucial, as the ball is in their court now, he added.

Asked whether the government has any say in who will be the next MD, Rokanuddin said as per the law there is no scope for the government to influence the process of appointing an MD.

The board of directors of the microlender may form a selection committee which may select a number of people from whom the board may finally pick one to appoint as the next MD, he said.

In reply to another question, he said the Bangladesh Bank letter does not give any deadline for appointing a new MD.

About the request of appointing Yunus as Grameen's chairman, Rokanuddin said it is a matter for the government's consideration, as only it has the authority to appoint a chairman.

Regarding the attorney general's comment that Yunus has no right to remain as the MD of Grameen following the SC verdict, Rokanuddin said it is entirely a personal opinion of the attorney general.

About seeking a review of the court's decision, he said they must look into the full text of the verdict before reaching a decision about the matter, as the text might contain many reasons for seeking a review.

Khulna

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Sultana Sathi.

Rizia, 13-year-old student of class eight, is undergoing treatment at Khulna Medical College Hospital.

Rizia is not mentally stable yet, said her father Kazi Rezaul Karim yesterday adding, she regained consciousness around 12:30pm on Thursday, 22 hours after she fainted due to the brutal corporal punishment.

Kamalesh beat her severely on Wednesday in presence of Headmaster Liakat Hossain as she refused to attend a private coaching centre run by Kamalesh.

Both Kamalesh and Liakat went into hiding after the victim's father filed a case against them on Wednesday night.

Sub-inspector Alamgir Kabir of Sonadanga Police Station said he has recorded statements of five teachers, six students and two staff who witnessed the incident.

All of them stated that Kamalesh beat Rizia black and blue, added the SI, also the investigation officer of the case.

District Education Officer Md Mizanur Rahman, chief of a three-member probe committee, told The Daily Star that he would submit the probe report tomorrow.

"We have got evidence in support of the allegation against the two accused," he added.

This is really a sad incident that happened just after the government imposed a ban on corporal punishment at educational institutions, said Tajul Islam Khan, founder president of the school's managing committee.

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Govt goes

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Over the years it has become obvious that the doctors posted to rural areas do not intend to go and stay there. Rather they opt for private practice in the capital and other divisional headquarters to gain financial benefits, stated sources in the ministry.

According to a survey of Health Rights Movement National Committee, only 57 percent doctors, recruited on an ad hoc basis, have joined offices in rural areas. The study was conducted in 37 upazilas of 13 districts last year.

Since assuming office in 2009, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on several occasions had warned the doctors of tough action for failing to provide health care service to the rural people, ministry officials said.

On March 29 she reiterated that they must either serve at district and upazila levels or quit the job.

The Prime Minister's Office recently directed the authorities concerned to show 'no mercy policy' to the physicians who absent themselves from their place of posting, added the officials.

Doctors' attendance at public health care institutions has improved recently due to the government's tougher stance, said civil surgeons.

Most of the upazila health complexes have no resource for caesarean delivery and the posts of consultants often go vacant, they pointed out.

They also opined the government should increase the facilities for doctors to ensure quality health care service at rural levels.

Lower courts

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The present government has so far appointed 207 assistant judges and judicial magistrates to lower courts through the commission.

On December 4 last year, chief justice ABM Khairul Haque in presence of the law minister told a function that the number of judges should be doubled to reduce the backlog of cases and sufferings of litigants.

In May 2004, the then caretaker government's comment that Yunus has no right to remain as the MD of Grameen following the SC verdict, Rokanuddin said it is entirely a personal opinion of the attorney general.

About seeking a review of the court's decision, he said they must look into the full text of the verdict before reaching a decision about the matter, as the text might contain many reasons for seeking a review.

Al-Qaeda confirms

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Mohammed bin Laden, God have mercy on him, was killed on the path taken by those before him and will be taken by others after him," reads the al-Qaeda message.

"Congratulations to the Islamic umma [community] for the martyrdom of its son Osama."

The global militant group, which said it will soon release an audio tape made by its leader a week before he died, vowed not to deviate from the path of armed struggle and said bin Laden's blood "is more precious to us and to every Muslim than to be wasted in vain."

"It will remain, with permission from God Almighty, a curse that hunts the Americans and their collaborators and chase them outside and inside their country," the militant network said in a statement released on Islamist Internet forums.

"Their happiness will turn into sorrow, and their blood will be mixed with their tears," al-Qaeda said.

"We call upon our Muslim people in Pakistan, on whose land Sheikh Osama was killed, to rise up and revolt to cleanse this shame that has been attached to them by a clique of traitors and thieves ... and in general to cleanse their country from the filth of the Americans who spread corruption in it."

The al-Qaeda statement also urged the United States to treat the bodies of Osama bin Laden and those killed with him in the raid with care, and to return their bodies.

"We warn the Americans not to harm the corpse of the sheikh or expose it to any indecent treatment or to harm any members of his family, living or dead, and to deliver the corpses to their families," it said.

"Any harm done will open the doors of evil upon you doubly, and you will not have anyone but yourselves to blame."

It added that the group would soon release an audio-tape of bin Laden that was recorded one week before he was killed by US commandos on Monday, reports Aljazeera.

CIA surveillance

The CIA had spent several months monitoring bin Laden's hideout, watching and photographing residents and visitors from a rented house nearby, according to US officials quoted in the New York Times and Washington Post.

Information about the apparent plans unearthed in Pakistan was contained in a joint FBI and Homeland Security bulletin, the Associated Press news agency said.

The bulletin, circulated to law enforcement officials, said the idea to tamper with an unspecified US railway

track was found in handwritten notes taken from Bin Laden's compound.

According to the bulletin, al-Qaeda operatives planned to derail a train so that it would plunge into a valley, or from a bridge, AP reported.

Officials are examining computers, DVDs, hard-drives and documents seized from the Abbottabad home where Bin Laden may have hid for up to six years, BBC reports.

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