

## Retired army man killed by wife

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A retired army man was killed by his wife and the man she was having an extra-marital affair with in the capital's Pallabi on Friday.

Nayek Md Mohsin Miah, 47, was brutally murdered by his wife Saleha Akhter Sheuli, 35, and her paramour Shariful Islam with the help of some hired criminals, said police.

After killing Mohsin, Saleha took his body to Combined Military Hospital (CMH) on Friday afternoon and told the doctors that her husband was involved in a road accident, they added.

But the doctors doubted her story as they found deep injury marks in the neck and then called police, said Abdul Latif Sheikh, officer-in-charge of Pallabi Police Station.

In the primary interrogation, Saleha told police that she, Sharif and some hired criminals together killed Mohsin as he obstructed the two from continuing their extra-marital affair, the OC said.

After her confession, police arrested Sharif on Saturday.

Saleha however told a Dhaka court that she herself killed Mohsin after feeding him sleeping pills.

The court sent Sharif on a five-day remand on Sunday, while Saleha landed in jail yesterday.

Quoting her confessional statement, the OC said Saleha and Sharif wanted to get married, so she decided to kill Mohsin.

Meanwhile, police recovered the body of an unidentified man from near Shetu Bhaban at Banani in the capital Friday night. The body had stab injuries.

## SHARING BRAHMAPUTRA Bangladesh to call for tripartite meet

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

Bangladesh is convening a high level tripartite meeting with India and Bhutan aimed at jointly utilising the water resources of the Brahmaputra river especially for power generation, Tariq A Karim, Bangladesh high commissioner to India, said on Saturday.

"Bangladesh is about to convene a meeting of Bhutan, India and Bangladesh on Brahmaputra basin management," Karim told reporters in Shillong, capital of north-eastern Indian state of Meghalaya bordering Bangladesh.

"We are all bound together by the Brahmaputra. We were separated (politically) and we are thinking how we can cooperate in harnessing the power and force of the river," he added.

Describing the three countries as the 'children' of Brahmaputra, Karim said, "The river cannot be tamed in segments. It has to be done together, so Bangladesh and Bhutan has to participate with Meghalaya and Assam."

Once the three countries embark on the project, it would transform the whole region, he said.

He said Bangladesh was eyeing at developing a thermal power plant across the border using coal available in Meghalaya's southern slope bordering the country.

A conveyor belt would be used to transfer coal from Meghalaya, the high commissioner added.

Karim was accompanying Gowher Rizvi, international affairs adviser to Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, when the latter called on Meghalaya Chief Minister Mukul Sangma at his office. Issues discussed at the meeting with Sangma included increasing the number of border haats, setting up cooperation between entrepreneurs of the two countries in food, fruit and spices processing.



PHOTO: YUNUS CENTRE  
Nobel Peace Prize winner Prof Muhammad Yunus, centre, being installed as chancellor of Glasgow Caledonian University (GCU) by Chairman of University Court Anthony Brian in Scotland on Friday. Also seen is GCU Vice-Chancellor Prof Pamela Gillies.

## Candlelight vigil held for minorities

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

People from different walks of life and faiths participated in a candlelight vigil at the Central Shaheed Minar in the capital yesterday to show their solidarity with the Buddhist community.

As Buddhists all over the country celebrated their Prabarana Purnima festivities with a heavy heart bearing Ramu scars, students, prominent civil society members and common people joined hands to seek their apology for the recent attacks on minorities.

"We say that we are a country of communal harmony, and yet often this harmony is challenged. That is our failure," said Professor Emeritus Dr Anisuzzaman of Dhaka University.

Rights activist Sultana Kamal said, "The

moment we were singing songs of peace on the dais, I received a message that the Ahmadiyah community came under attack in Rangpur.

"We need to be very aware that there are still elements in this country trying to create problems for a secular Bangladesh."

"We can say a country is developed only when its minority rights are protected," said Humaira Islam of Urban Study Group.

Prof Serajul Islam Chowdhury, Hameeda Hossain, Sara Hossain, Khushi Kabir, Prof Kazi Madinah, and Prof Nasrin Ahmed also took part in the programme.

The event was organised with the participation of different organisations, including Urban Study Group, Ain o Salish Kendro, Nijera Kori and Transparency International Bangladesh.



PHOTO: STAR  
Eminent citizens take part in a candlelight vigil at the capital's Central Shaheed Minar yesterday to say no to violence against minorities. Different social and rights organisations organised the programme.

## Bad market for cattle traders this year

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The seasonal cattle traders could hardly make any profit this year due to higher supply of sacrificial animals in the capital's cattle market set up ahead of Eid-ul-Azha, traders say.

As many cattle remained unsold in absence of proper bargain price, traders were seen returning to their village homes with cattle-laden trucks.

Motaleb Hossain, a cattle trader in a makeshift market at Shanir Akhra, said "Even three days before (the eid), the asking price for one of my bulls was Tk 60,000."

"But, today (the day before the eid), buyers were asking me whether I would sell the bull at Tk 45,000.

I will have to sell it at minimum Tk 52,000 to cover my losses," he told this correspondent on Friday evening.

Motaleb, who brought five cows from Kishoreganj, managed to sell only three, but fell into trouble with two unsold ones.

Nasir Hossain, a buyer, said "I bought a cow at Tk 55,000 a day before the eid. But, its price should have been more than Tk 70,000."

Those, who had sold their cattle three to four days before the eid, could make quite a bit of profit, traders add.

## Medical wastes ending up in childrens' hands

ZYMA ISLAM

At first glance, ten-year-old Hridoy looks like any other child his age, clad in a colourful T-shirt showing popular cartoon characters and a pair of shorts.

A closer look reveals that he is sitting on top of a pile of trash in a small plastic-recycling shed in the capital's Islambagh, tugging needles off used plastic syringes. His face is streaked with grime while his hands and feet are riddled with scars.

"The scars came from needle pricks. The spot must be burned to prevent infection but the scars remain on the skin," he said.

His 15-year-old co-worker nonchalantly adds, "This is only the beginning. Hridoy has only been working for two months. I have worked here ever since I was a little boy and have been pricked by needles many times. I know it is dangerous, but what can I do?"

"We get injured so often that we do not bother to go to the doctor for it," says Hridoy's father Belal, 52, who also works in plastic recycling enterprises.

Hearing of their only precautionary measure, it is possible that they perhaps do not know the extent of the dangers they are exposed to.

"A prick from a used needle could transmit life-threatening blood-borne or fluid-transmitted diseases like AIDS and Hepatitis B and C," says Prof Dr Mohammed Kamal, pathology department head at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University.

Hundreds of children just like Hridoy are engaged in the industry of recycling plastic waste, a sizeable portion of which comprises medical waste, in Islambagh's alleys and surrounding areas.

Poverty forces them to endanger their lives 12 hours a day seven days a week for a meagre Tk 400.

The medical wastes come to Dhaka from all over the country via boat while the city's hospitals churn out plenty of their own. After collection and sorting, the plastic materials are sent to factories to be broken down and used in making new materials.

Children are present in all steps of the recycling process, but they mostly work in the sorting sector, the one Hridoy is engaged in.

However, Bangladesh Plastic Goods Manufacturers and Exporters Association

General Secretary KM Iqbal Hossain denied the presence of child workers in this plastic recycling industry.

It is difficult to estimate the number of plastic recycling enterprises present since the association claims that many are not registered with them.

Mitford Hospital, being close by, is a hot source of raw materials for the plastic recycling enterprises, the workers say.

Commander Enamul Haque, chief waste management officer at Dhaka South City Corporation, however, claimed that the corporation had a system for collection and proper disposal of medical wastes from hospitals.

This system upholds children's rights too, he said.

"Yet, I cannot claim that Mitford's staff do not unscrupulously sell medical wastes for personal benefits," he says.

"Nonetheless, since the system is only limited to government hospitals, the Islambagh recycling factories can get medical waste supplies from profit-hungry private hospitals who scrimp for pennies," he adds.

Enamul said, "We are trying to incorporate the private hospitals into the government waste-collection system as well and have decided not to renew their licenses if they refuse."

Nurul Islam Tuhin, general manager of Shomorita Hospital, claimed that they were registered with the government waste disposal service. "All the big private hospitals use the government system," he says.

According to the United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef), children involved in medical waste disposal, collection and recycling are categorised as children doing hazardous jobs, says Unicef Communication Manager Arifa Sharmin.

Unicef Bangladesh is piloting a development project targeting child workers in the old part of Dhaka.

"The project aims to bring children out of hazardous professions. It is a cash transfer system that pays the family Tk 1,600 per month in order to keep their children in schools. So far we have reached 500 children, but will be targeting more in the future," says Arifa.

But till each and every child is taken out of these hazardous jobs, the number of scars on little hands just like Hridoy's will continue to increase.

## CASES OVER VESTED PROPERTIES Appeal tribunal sought

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A civil society coordination cell on the vested properties return act has urged the government to immediately form an appeal tribunal so that people who are unhappy with the judgments in their cases over vested properties can lodge appeals.

The cell members said in a signed statement yesterday that the appeal tribunal was supposed to be formed under Section 19 of the Vested Properties Return (Amendment) Act 2011 through a gazette notification but it was yet to be formed.

They drew the attention of the law minister and his ministry in this regard, saying delay in forming the tribunal was creating problems to the litigants in the

adjudicated cases in many districts as their lawyers could not even help them over the issue.

They also alleged that in many districts the list of the vested properties under "Kha" group (lands under possession of common people rather than government) is not available though it was supposed to be easily accessible after a specific period of time under the act.

The list was not also available at local levels, and even the BG Press was not supplying any copy of the list, they said, and requested the land ministry to immediately solve the problem.

Lands which are under government's possession fall under "Ka" group.

## SAUDI EMBASSY OFFICIAL KILLING Indictment hearing starts tomorrow

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court will start tomorrow the charge framing hearing against the five accused in Saudi embassy official Khalaf Al Ali murder case.

Judge Mohammad Motahar Hossain of the Speedy Trial Tribunal-4 fixed the date yesterday after scrutinising the case and other relevant documents.

Earlier, the case was transferred to the tribunal from Dhaka Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court for its quick disposal as per the home ministry decision.

On September 20, detectives pressed charges against the five accused--Mohammad Al Amin, Saiful Islam Mamun, Rafiqul Islam Khokon, Selim Chowdhury and Akbar Ali Lal.

Four of the accused are now in jail custody, while Selim is on the run.

Khalaf, 45, worked at the consular section of the Saudi embassy. He was shot dead in a mugging incident near his Gulshan house in the small hours of March 6.

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