



PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

A large number of law enforcers at the home of murder suspect Nur Hossain in Demra. Police collected evidence and arrested 11 people at the house in connection with the last week's murder of seven individuals in Narayanganj.

Obvious result in belated raid

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been pointing the finger at Nur and Haji Mohammad Yasin, general secretary of Siddhirganj AL.

Both are prime accused in the case filed for abduction and killing of Nazrul and his aides.

On Thursday, a day after the bodies were found in the river, angry locals set fire to two offices of Nur at Shimrail on Dhaka-Chittagong highway and vandalised another near Kanchpur bridge.

After all these developments, police said Nur's house was not raided earlier because they didn't have necessary information.

"We raided the house based on information provided by detectives that a secret meeting was being held there," Narayanganj SP Khandaker Mahid Uddin told journalists during a briefing at his office.

He added police arrested a person identified as Shipon with the mobile phone of Chandan from Dhaka on Friday night.

At the end of the raid yesterday, police took away the detainees in two minibuses through the backside of the residential complex with three two-storey buildings, while journalists and hundreds of locals were waiting in front.

Police allowed journalists to enter the compound for barely 10 minutes. The buildings are owned by three siblings including Nur, according to locals. A neighbour said the family had not been staying at the house since the

abduction.

During the raid, the SP said, police detained 16 people but released five who are security guards. "We picked the 11 for quizzing."

Nazrul's brother Abdus Salam told The Daily Star that from the very beginning they are not getting any positive response from law enforcers.

While Narayanganj is fuming over the brutal killing of the seven, another body was recovered from the Shitalakkhya yesterday.

Locals saw the bloated body at Chanpara in Rupganj upazila and informed police, said Asaduzzaman, officer-in-charge of Rupganj Police Station. It was sent to Narayanganj General Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Earlier in the day, Narayanganj District Bar Association formed a human chain and held a brief rally in front of the local press club in support of their hartal called to protest against the killings.

SAIFUL ABDUCTION

Detectives have arrested two people at Jatrabari in the capital in connection with the abduction of businessman Saiful Islam.

Of the two, Akash, a bKash service provider, was arrested around 4:15pm yesterday from his shop, said Abdul Ahad, additional deputy commissioner (north) of DB police.

Police found that a ransom was demanded from Saiful's manager Hannan using the mobile phone num-

ber of Akash, he added.

Talking about another detainee Nurjahan, held on Friday night, DMP Joint Commissioner Monirul Islam said she lured Saiful to the location from where he was abducted on Thursday.

Saiful, who was abducted at Shanarpar in Narayanganj on Thursday and freed in Savar 26 hours later, gave deposition before a senior judicial magistrate in Narayanganj earlier in the day.

Addressing the press at the DMP media centre, Monirul also said following the abduction spree all over the country, they formed an "anti-kidnappingsquad".

ABDUCTION IN NOAKHALI

A trader in Begumganj upazila of Noakhali was rescued yesterday a day after his abduction.

Captors freed Abul Basar, 42, in Bangla Bazar area on Laxmipur-Noakhali road around 10:30am. Begumganj Police later took him to the police station.

Two unidentified persons on a motorbike picked Basar from Alaipur area of the upazila on Friday afternoon. The kidnappers demanded Tk 5 lakh from his family over the phone.

ASM Ashrafuzzaman, additional police superintendent of police, said they had detained five suspects in this connection.

(Our Narayanganj and Noakhali correspondents contributed to this report)

So easy to be rich

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Siddhirganj and Fatullah of Narayanganj.

He had been in conflict with Nazrul over the control of these illegal businesses. Their rivalry reached its peak when Nazrul defeated Hossain by a single vote in the panel mayor election. Hossain last year organised indecent stage shows in the name of jatra, a traditional form of theatre, at Shimrail Truck Terminal in Siddhirganj, said locals.

It drew huge protests and criticism from locals, but he continued it under the nose of police and the administration.

The chief executive officer of Narayanganj City Corporation on April 16 served a notice to Hossain, asking him to stop anti-social activities. Copies of the letter were sent to the home ministry, the district superintendent of police and the deputy commissioner.

In response to a petition in April last year, the High Court asked the authorities concerned to immediately stop all anti-social and illegal activities at the truck terminal.

But nothing could deter Hossain, as he had the blessing of influential AL lawmaker Shamim Osman, alleged

locals.

Before joining the BNP in 1992, he worked as a truck driver and was involved with HM Ershad's Jatiya Party. On behalf of police, he collected extortion money from vehicles plying Narayanganj areas, alleged locals.

After joining BNP, he started extorting money from transport owners on his own, and gradually got involved in other criminal activities with the support of local BNP leaders. Later, he became the chairman of Siddhirganj union parishad.

When the AL came to power in 1996, Hossain changed his political platform and joined the party in 1998 with the help of Shamim. This allowed him to continue criminal activities such as extorting transport owners, land grabbing and illegal sand trade.

As the BNP-led government assumed power in 2001, both Shamim and Hossain fled the country. They were on the run till the end of 2008. Hossain was on the list of criminals during the tenures of the BNP and the caretaker governments.

Interpol issued an arrest warrant against Hossain in 2007. He returned to Bangladesh after the AL-led grand alliance government came to power in 2009, and got Shamim's backing to

run illegal activities again, according to locals and AL sources.

A total of 22 cases, including six for murder, were filed against Hossain with Siddhirganj and Fatullah police stations. He eluded arrest by taking bail in all the cases.

A day after Shamim got AL ticket in December for contesting the national polls, Hossain occupied footpaths in Narayanganj city and Shimrail. He illegally built ticket counters and passenger sheds, and launched a bus service, ABS Paribahan, on Simrail-Narayanganj route.

Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority wrote to Siddhirganj Police Station 22 times after it failed to stop Hossain's men from extracting sand in the Shitalakkhya river and evict his illegal establishments on the river bank.

Hossain, who holds the post of vice president of Siddhirganj thana AL unit since 2007, was elected ward-4 councillor of Narayanganj City Corporation in 2011.

He was last seen in Siddhirganj after Nazrul and six others were abducted on April 27. Hossain went into hiding from April 29. Police raided his Siddhirganj house yesterday and arrested 11 people.

2,700 feared dead or missing

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are in immense need of assistance."

The United Nations said the focus was now on the more than 4,000 people displaced, either directly as a result of the landslide or as a precautionary measure from villages assessed to be at risk. The IOM said over 14,000 people were affected.

Their main needs are water, medicine, food and emergency shelter, said Ari Gaitanis.

Officials expressed concern the unstable hillside above the site of the disaster may cave in again, threatening the homeless as well as the UN and local rescue teams working there.

Villagers and a few dozen police, equipped with only basic digging tools, resumed their search when daylight broke but it soon became clear there was no hope of finding survivors buried in the deep mud and rubble.

"Seven members of my family were here, four or five of them were killed ... I am also half alive, what can I do?" said an elderly woman, her hair covered in a pink shawl.

Dotted with villages of mud-brick homes nestled in valleys beside bare slopes, Badakhshan province has been

hit by several deadly landslides in recent years.

The side of the mountain above Abi-Barak collapsed at around 11am on Friday as people were trying to recover belongings and livestock after a smaller landslip hit a few hours earlier.

Hundreds of homes were destroyed in the landslides that were triggered by torrential rain. Officials worry another section of the mountainside could collapse at any time.

The Afghan military flew rescue teams to the area yesterday, as the remote mountain region is served by only narrow, poor roads which have themselves been damaged by more than a week of heavy rain.

"We have managed to get one excavator into the area, but digging looks hopeless," Colonel Abdul Qadeer Sayad, a deputy police chief of Badakhshan, told Reuters.

He said the sheer size of the area affected, and the depth of the mud, meant that only modern machinery could help.

Nato-led coalition troops were on standby to assist yesterday but said the Afghan government had not asked for help.

although some were given tents. Officials distributed food and water.

Seasonal rains and spring snow melt have caused devastation across large swathes of northern Afghanistan, killing more than 100 people before this latest disaster.

Police said they had provided a security ring around the area, which has been relatively free of insurgent attacks. The Taliban said they were also willing to provide security.

Thanks or no

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weirdest part is the once beautiful girl is actually proud of her new look.

In her original photographs, Rina looks like a sweet, normal young girl with a cherubic face. But in the past year, she underwent all sorts of transformations – all of which she chronicled on her Twitter account – that she seems like a totally different person. She has made several changes to her eyes, nose and chin that left her looking strange to many of her former fans. Still, Nanase was surprised to receive such negative reactions to her facial enhancements, as she doesn't seem to think her looks have changed that much.

Cops gag voice

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At one stage, police intervened and took away their banners, leaflets and loudspeakers.

Noted economist Debapriya Bhattacharya told journalists, "I am surprised why our banners, placards, leaflets and loudspeakers have been taken away. The banners have no anti-government content."

Rights activist Shaheen Anam said, "We want justice for disappearances, killings and abductions. We want the perpetrators to be tried and punished," were the words written on our banners.

"We held similar programmes here on many occasions before and never had to take permission for them. Yet, we informed the DMP [Dhaka Metropolitan Police] yesterday [Friday] about our programme."

Debapriya said they had written to the DMP on Friday regarding the human chain but did not get any response.

Masudur Rahman, DMP deputy commissioner (media), however, told The Daily Star the "Concerned Citizens" did not seek permission for their programme.

Seeking anonymity, a police official from Tejgaon zone said they allowed the civil society members to form the human chain for about an hour even though they did not have any permission.

"The parliament premises are a sensitive place, but we allowed them to continue with their programme with respect," the official added.

Former caretaker government adviser Rasheda K Chowdhury said, "The government gives permission to Hefajat-e Islam for holding a rally, but when people like us want to voice our rights peacefully, we get gagged."

Rights activists Hamida Hossain, Sultana Kamal, Sarah Hossain, Bodul Alam Majumdar, Iftekharuzzaman, Zi Khan, CR Abrar, Shirin Haque, former MP of Narayanganj Kobori Sarwar were among those who gathered to call for an end to disappearances, killings, abductions, extrajudicial killings and arrests made by plainclothes cops and arrests without warrants.

The "Concerned Citizens" also demanded justice for the murders committed in Narayanganj including that of Toki. They urged the politicians not to protect the godfathers, and stop the politics of blame.

They also said they would gather in front of the parliament building again on Wednesday afternoon with permission from the DMP.

9 cops injured

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from the spot. The others managed to escape.

The robbers were admitted to Brahmanbaria Sadar Hospital.

Contacted, Ali Arshad, officer-in-charge of Sarail Police Station, confirmed the incident.

A case was filed in this connection.

Universities against it

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admission process -- from selling forms to holding the examinations and checking scripts. They get a good amount of money from it. So, they don't want to bring any changes to the existing system," said a top official of the ministry asking not to be identified.

"The authorities of the universities, on the other hand, deposit a portion of the money that comes from the admission and distribute the rest among the teachers involved in the process. Nobody knows what amount the universities earn and what they deposit," the official added.

Moreover, teachers of some reputed universities were against being tagged with other universities apparently for their ego problems, the official observed.

As a result, the existing system persists, putting huge pressure on the admission seekers and their parents or guardians. It also eats up at least five months from the education life of the students to get enrolled in the universities after passing the HSC exams.

As soon as the HSC exams are over, most of the admission seekers turn to coaching centres and spend a large amount of money, which most parents from mid- or lower-income groups would like to keep in their pockets.

Apart from spending the coaching fee ranging from Tk 7,000 to 10,000, many of them have to stay in cities like Dhaka or Chittagong for three to four months. In addition to that, they need to buy admission forms that cost Tk 400 to Tk 500 each. Most average students cannot afford to take forms from only one or two universities as the move might jeopardise their academic career in case of failure to obtain a place because of a tough competition.

Besides, the candidates have to travel, often with their parents or guardians, from across the country and sometimes they have to check in at hotels to sit for the admission tests. In most cases they have to vie for a seat at separate faculties, sometimes even separate departments, under the same university through separate tests.

Contacted, Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid said the students along with their guardians had to face troubles for enrolment at the universities.

"Coaching business has mushroomed over the years centring the admission tests as economists estimate the total size of the business at Tk 32,000 crore," he added.

The minister further said a one-hour admission test could not fully judge the merit of a student, who spent at least 48 hours in the exam hall at the HSC level.

Nahid, however, said the vice-chancellors of the universities at a meeting last year agreed to go for the cluster system from this year. "We hope they would implement it this year," he added.

Last year, Shahjalal Science and Technology University and Jessore Science and Technology University went for a combined admission test approved by the UGC.

However, SUST backtracked on its

decision in the face of strong opposition from a group of students, who agitated under the banner "Conscious Sylhetis", terming the combined test "discriminatory".

Contacted, UGC Chairman Prof Dr AK Azad Chowdhury said the cluster system would be well coordinated and ease the hassle of admission seekers.

"Every year when we discuss the issue with the vice-chancellors, they initially agree, but when it comes to practical application they show reluctance," he told The Daily Star.

One of the reasons, he said, was that the teachers and employees involved in the admission process got some honorarium from the admission. Besides, the universities are autonomous and they thought introducing the cluster system would cost the characteristic, he added.

"We will soon sit with the vice-chancellors to discuss the issue. We will recommend a system for the admission test, but it is totally up to the universities concerned to decide on which system they would follow," mentioned Azad.

Prof Ruhul Amin, president of Association of Universities of Bangladesh, a platform of the vice-chancellors of public universities, said they would take a decision after the announcement of results of this year's HSC exams.

Also VC of Hajee Mohammad Danesh Science and Technology University, Prof Amin said there were both merits and demerits of the cluster system.

"Even many guardians don't appreciate the system. We have seen the movement of guardians against the combined admission test in Sylhet," he noted.

Jamaat man

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Shahidullah Gazi, cousin of Raihan, started beating up Akhtar when he came out of a mosque after Esha prayers at Chandpur intersection around 8:30pm.

Later, the attackers took Akhtar to Shakhipur area and gave him a thorough beating, leaving him critically injured.

On information, police rescued the Jamaat man and sent him to Debhata Upazila Health Complex, where doctors declared him dead around 11:30pm, said Kazi Jamal Uddin, officer-in-charge of Debhata Police Station.

Mukter said they heard about the death of his brother yesterday morning.

Contacted, Shahidullah Gazi denied the allegation and said he learnt yesterday morning that a group of agitated people had killed Akhtar.

The Jamaat man was accused in three cases, including the one for killing Raihan, added the OC.

AL leader Raihan was hacked to death allegedly by Jamaat-Shibir activists on November 21 last year.

Police have filed a case in connection with the murder of Akhtar accusing around 160 unnamed people.



Teachers signing attendance sheets at the venue of a reception programme for State Minister for Fisheries and Livestock Narayan Chandra Chanda at Dumuria of Khulna yesterday. This was done to make sure that teachers of over 200 schools joined the reception programme.

PHOTO: STAR

3D does the trick

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foothills at Nainital in Uttarakhand and Bilaspur in Himachal Pradesh.

He has already addressed more than 800 rallies in hologram form where his lifelike performance has been greeted with a mix of awe and disbelief. Many poorly educated voters had stayed behind after rallies to check behind the dais to see if he was really there, officials said.

Bharatiya Janata Party officials told The Telegraph the use of hologram technology had enabled Modi to reach voters he would not otherwise address in some of the country's most inaccessible corners from studios in Delhi and Ahmedabad in Gujarat where he is chief minister.

They believe it has played a vital role in extending the "Modi wave" – the appearance that he has unstoppable momentum in the campaign. So far he has given eight hologram speeches to 900 rallies, each drawing average crowds of 10,000. By the time voting finishes on May 12, he will have given

a further six speeches at 1450 rallies and reached more than 14 million extra voters.

Party spokeswoman Nirmala Sitaram said at some remote locations, where illiteracy is high, audience members believed Modi had actually visited and were perplexed when the image simply disappeared at the end of the speech.

"When the lights are switched on and the public sees the stage is bare, the whole set has gone away, it creates a sense of awe. The illiterate in India's villages are used to films but this is better.....They think he has probably gone to the green room. They wait for the experience to sink in and ask where he is. Is he behind [the stage]? Their faces are so surprised. They say 'This happened and I saw it'," she said.

Modi had experimented with hologram technology for rallies during his 2012 state assembly elections in Gujarat, and had assembled a team of up to 40 technologists and more than 400 camera and sound staff in 120 truck-based teams.

209 primary schools

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programme. "Teachers association leaders arranged the programme. They invited me and made me chairman of the programme."

As to why he gave the permission, he said he did not want to go against the wishes of all the teachers of the upazila.

Signatures were taken from all the teachers present at the programme.

Dumuria Upazila Parishad Chairman Khan Ali Mansur, also the president of upazila primary school committee, criticised this and said the programme could have been arranged on a holiday.

"The upazila education officer will be given a notice in this regard," he told The Daily Star.

Though the reception was arranged on the premises of his office and he holds the highest post in the local primary school management committee, the upazila chairman, who is a local leader of the BNP, was not invited to the programme.

The state minister could not be reached for his comments despite several attempts over the phone.