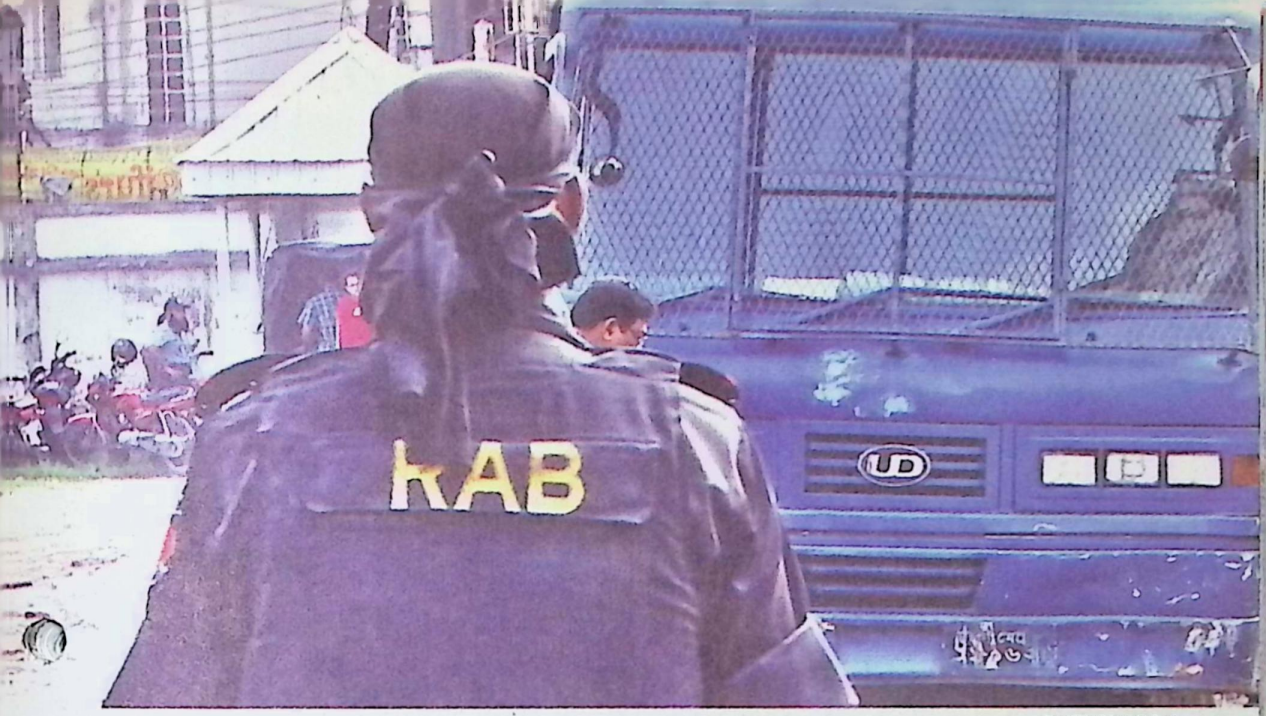


PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

neighbours. The officer entered her house and sat in the hall to take down details of the dispute, and damage to her plantation and her house. After recording all these details he gave her a note instructing her to come to his Police Station on March 15 for an inquiry. The officer then walked around the house assessing the damage, and observing that there seemed to be some damage to the tiles over the bedroom asked her to show him into the bedroom to see it from inside. When she showed him into the room, the officer suddenly caught her in his arms. Surprised, she tried to get away but he held her tightly and kicked the bedroom door shut. She struggled to get away from him but he then hit her spine hard with his hand and threatened her not to make noise. He then threw her onto the bed. She tried to get up and escape by pushing the officer away from her. However, the officer forcibly raped her and she lost consciousness.

This does not only happen in the sub-continent.

Last March in California, a veteran San Jose police officer was arrested for a sexual assault in a local hotel room. Officer (in uniform) Geoff Graves, 38, surrendered to authorities after the Santa Clara County District Attorney's Office filed one count of forcible rape against him in an incident on September 22, 2013.

In Ohio, the trial started of a veteran Cleveland police officer charged with raping two women four years apart. Now this one is a serial killer. Gregory Jones, 49, faces multiple charges of rape, kidnapping and gross sexual imposition. Jones, an officer of more than 20 years (shame), has maintained his innocence (they all do usually) and his attorneys say both woman lack credibility, and have told inconsistent stories. Jones has been on inactive duty since his arrest.

In December 2012, a young woman in Milwaukee called the cops when someone threw a brick through her window. When the brick had crashed through her bathroom window and somebody began kicking in her front door, the 19-year-old single mother of two in Milwaukee dialled 911 what are supposed to be the most trustworthy three numbers. One of the cops who came to help raped her. Mamma Mia!

In Karachi just before midnight last Sunday, ten men in forces uniform breached the high security cordon of the Jinnah International Airport by using a vehicle of the forces. No one raised an eyebrow. Once behind the line, they opened fire indiscriminately but were outgunned by the army only to be among the over two dozen people killed in an operation lasting over six hours, according to first information. Some reports suggested that the terrorists were trying to hijack a plane or have blown up an aircraft, both denied by the authorities. Pakistan Tehreek-e-Taliban later claimed that they were behind the attack in revenge of a Pakistan forces attack on their villages. When will these chains ever end?

The uniform is a matter of pride for any serving person. Members of the public look up to men and women in uniform with respect and confidence. The uniform gives the wearer immunity and access to any premises. Men in uniform take advantage of any situation, and are waved by security gates. The problem is the terrorists have discovered this to their advantage. They can now enter most forbidden areas if they can get hold of a uniform.

It is for us to take utmost precaution as a community. Persons in uniform should not be taken for granted. They must not be given access to one's premises and home. They must be queried about their identification. They must never be met alone, not anymore. ■