

Couple found dead

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confirmed the recovery of the bodies from a flat on Road-5 of the area.

The OC, however, could not say anything about the motive behind the murders.

The couple have three sons and a daughter who were not at home during the incident. Only their maid-servant, Firoza begum, 60, was at home at the time of the killings, family sources said.

Police recovered a pistol and a few rounds of bullet from in front of Rouf's body. Family members claimed it was a licensed weapon.

Referring to the pistol, Inspector Saiful Islam of Cantonment Police Station said, "Based on the evidence I suspect that the husband at first shot his wife in a fit of anger and then shot himself."

The deceased's daughter, Sonali, 15, went to a nearby playground around 4.00pm and came back home about two and a half hours later to find her parents dead.

"When I came back home, the front door was open and I went to my parents' bedroom where I found my mother lying prostrate on bed. My mother did not respond when I called her. Then I found my father sitting in one corner of the room with blood dripping from his head," Police quoted Sonali as saying.

Kamrul Majid, director of security and admin at Banani DOHS, said he rushed to the scene after hearing the news from a neighbour.

The maid servant said she could not hear anything due to the sound of the ceiling fan, said Majid quoting Firoza.

The security guard of the house confirmed that no unknown person went in or came out of the building between 4:00pm and 7:00pm when the murders were committed, said Majid adding that nothing was stolen from the house.

A team of Rab visited the scene while another team of Criminal Investigation Department (CID) were collecting evidence from the spot as of filing this report at 1:30am today.

Relatives of the dead said Rouf incurred considerable business loss and was saddled with bank loans which kept him very frustrated for a long time. He also picked a few fights with his wife now and then, they added.

Police sent the bodies to the Dhaka Medical Morgue.

Dhaka to press

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protocols and agreements signed between the two countries earlier, home ministry sources said.

Bangladesh will urge India to ratify the 1974 Land Boundary Agreement and the Land Boundary Protocol, transfer of enclaves and demarcation of 6.5 km of land boundary as soon as possible, sources added.

India is yet to ratify the agreements though it assured Dhaka it was working on the issue and was expecting to place it for ratification in the next parliament session. The ratification would facilitate the transfer of enclaves

and demarcation of 6.5 km of land boundary between the two neighbours.

Dhaka would strongly protest the firing, killing and torture of Bangladeshi citizens along the border, and smuggling of arms, drugs and other contraband elements from India. It will also urge India to amend the Revised Travel Arrangement (RTA) to ease visa complexity, said the official requesting anonymity.

Besides, the home secretaries would also discuss the Interpol mechanism, new or reopening of immigration points, construction of fencing within

150 yards of international border, and human trafficking, the sources added.

During the talks, both sides will sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on bilateral cooperation for prevention of human trafficking and rescue and rehabilitation of the victims.

The last meeting was held in New Delhi on July 19 last year where the two home secretaries reaffirmed their commitment not to allow the territory of either country to be used for any activity inimical to each other's interests.

A meeting of the India-Bangladesh joint working group will also be held today at the same place.

MP's strange justification

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Intermediate and Secondary Education, Rajshahi (BISER) asking the officials concerned to replace Harun who was nominated by the MP himself only four months ago.

"In the demand order, we were asked to appoint Bijoy Kumar Ghosh, deputy director (admin) of Education Engineering Department, Dhaka in place of Harun-ur Rashid," said Anarul Haque, inspector of colleges at BISER, adding that replacing a college governing body president in six months without any valid reason is not lawful.

BISER Chairman Prof MA Rouf Mia said complying with the request would not be lawful.

"We will discuss the matter with the

MP," he said.

However, Anarul Haque said the college governing body has the legal authority to reinstate any sacked staff.

ABOUT MANNAN

Rajshahi district administration in a probe found Mannan guilty of several underhand dealings. According to the probe report, he had appointed his wife as a lecturer at the college with forged documents; he had misappropriated at least Tk 1.77 lakh in the years 1998-2009; he had illegally enjoyed benefits from college lands and took allowances through fake vouchers; he had appointed a teacher and ensured his salaries showing false documents.

The probe also found that he

secured his promotion as the college principal by means of forgery. It says Mannan obtained 3rd division both in HSC exams and BA honours degree and no one can be promoted to college principal with this qualification.

When contacted, Abdul Mannan told this correspondent that all allegations against him are false.

"Some governing body members fabricated charges against me as I did not support them in certain matters," he said.

He, however, could not provide any argument in support of his claims.

Harun-ur Rashid said he [Mannan] was sacked only after the probe report was verified by another committee following his prayer.

Tarique's wife sacked

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Diseases, went to London with her husband and daughter in September 2008.

Tarique, elder son of BNP chief Khaleda Zia, went there for treatment after he was released from prison on parole during the caretaker government tenure. Since then, the family has been staying there.

Before going to London, Zubaida

had taken leave without pay and then extended it. Later she applied for a further extension on grounds of her husband's illness, but the government did not respond, said Zubaida's assistant Mostafa Aziz Sumon.

Contacted last night, Mostafa, himself a physician, said Zubaida had no intention other than accompanying her ailing husband, but the government sacked her without following

service rules.

Under the rules, if a public official stays abroad during leave, s/he has to be communicated through the Bangladesh mission about his/her being disqualified for the job three months before dismissal, he said.

"The government did not consider the human aspect of sacking Dr Tarique," he added.

Hasina said Bangladesh has a dearth of skilled manpower and proper technology for exploring marine resources although it has a huge stock of living and non-living resources available under the seabed and water column.

She also mentioned that as a coastal country, the interests of Bangladesh are associated with the sea, and the main obstacle to establishing rights there was unsettled sea boundary with India and Myanmar.

Hasina said it was her government

that ratified the UN Convention on

the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) in

2001, creating huge opportunity for establishing Bangladesh's rights in

the sea on the basis of international

laws and regulations.

JS to pass bill

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committee on the law ministry, confirmed it to The Daily Star.

Earlier on August 18, the cabinet approved the proposal for restoration of parliament's authority to impeach Supreme Court judges.

According to the draft law, parliament could impeach an SC judge on grounds of misconduct or incapacity by passing a resolution with at least a two-thirds majority. The president will then issue an order to this effect.

At the Business Advisory Committee meeting, it was also decided that the third session of the 10th parliament, which began yesterday, would continue till September 18.

The meeting, chaired by Speaker

Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury, was attended among others by Leader of the House and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Leader of the Opposition Raushan Ershad.

The JS on its first day in the third session yesterday adopted obituary references on the death of 17 noted personalities, including former lawmakers and journalists.

After the question-answer session, Raushan Ershad took the floor and urged the government to form separate commissions to discuss the two bills on the national broadcast policy and the constitutional amendment that would give back parliament the power to impeach Supreme Court judges.

"Only discussions can resolve every-

thing and thus the government should form committees in consultation with all stakeholders and the common people to avert controversy," she said.

The opposition leader expressed her concern over deteriorating law and order situation in the country mentioning recent killing of Islamic Front leader Sheikh Nurul Islam Faruqi and Moghbazar's triple murder.

"Home is the safest place for a person and if he is killed in his own house, then where will he go?" she raised the question and called upon the government to ensure rule of law by bringing the culprits to book.

Raushan also asked the government to distribute adequate relief materials among the flood-affected people.

No deadlines

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Speculation and conspiracy theories are widespread, the most popular of which sees the powerful military as somehow engineering the ongoing crisis.

This view is a consequence of numerous events, the most recent being PTI President Javed Hashmi's allegations that Imran Khan said the current crisis is following a script dictated by the military.

Amid the rallying calls for the PM's resignation and an overthrow of the system, all eyes are on the Supreme Court and the army as the deadlock continues.

In a statement issued yesterday, the ISPR has rejected the assertions that the military and ISI were backing the protesters, reports DawnNews.

The press release states: "ISPR has categorically rejected the assertions that Army and ISI were backing PTI/PAT in anyway in the current political stand-off. Army is an apolitical institution and has expressed its unequivocal support for democracy at numerous occasions. It is unfortunate that Army is dragged into such controversies."

Ahead of a joint session of parliament, Pakistan's prime minister and army chief held marathon meetings yesterday over violent anti-government protests that could force the premier of this nuclear-armed country to resign.

Nawaz Sharif again vowed he would

not step down under duress, even as

protesters briefly took over the country's state-run television broadcaster and battled security forces in the streets.

The parliamentary session today appears to be an attempt to rally political support to the prime minister's side.

The turmoil comes as part of the mass demonstrations led by cleric Tahir-ul-Qadri and opposition politician Imran Khan. Both demand Sharif step down over their allegations of fraud in last year's election.

The protests, which have been peaceful for weeks, turned ugly this weekend when clashes between protesters and security forces killed three people and wounded some 400 in running street battles in Pakistan's capital, Islamabad.

The last 48 hours saw the anti-government protests morph Islamabad's Red Zone from a concert ground to a bloody battlefield, with at least three people killed and hundreds injured.

Clashes broke out early yesterday and continued sporadically throughout the day. The state PTV channel and its English-language PTV World service were taken off the air after protesters stormed its headquarters.

A PTV source told Reuters the protesters had occupied the main control room and smashed some equipment.

Uniformed members of a paramilitary force and soldiers later secured the building and the station later came back on the air.

Defense Minister Khawaja Asif told Reuters the government was preparing to launch a selective crackdown against protesters, possibly later yesterday, and warned demonstrators against storming government buildings.

"The writ of the state must be enforced. We hope to make a decisive move sometimes later today, not in the evening but even before that," he said. "I personally feel that the next few hours will determine the course of coming events."

The United States, already concerned about regional stability at a time when most of its troops are leaving neighbouring Afghanistan, called for restraint by all sides.

In an interview to a private TV channel, PTI President Javed Hashmi said that he had told his party's chairman not to leave his fate on any third umpire. "Khan Sahib, do not think that the umpire will favour this to," Hashmi claimed to have told this to the PTI chairman.

He said Saifullah Niazi, Jahangir Tareen and Sheikh Rasheed were the ones who mended Imran's opinion regarding Army's support. Hashmi claimed that the PTI chief had been assured about support of five Corps Commanders.

There has also been disagreement on how to handle Islamist militants, and on relations with old rival India.

Blue Economy

PM points at potentials of marine resources

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday underscored the marine-based economic activities and management of sea and its resources through "Blue Economy", saying such activities could create new horizon for the development of a coastal country like Bangladesh.

She also emphasised the need for tapping the huge potentials of sea and sea resources through proper management to ensure sustainable development.

The prime minister made the observations while inaugurating a two-day "International Workshop on Blue Economy" at a hotel in the capital.

Hasina said the marine-based economic activities through Blue Economy alongside the existing land-based development activities could further expedite the development of the coastal countries like Bangladesh and the developing coastal states.

"It is time-befitting in the present perspective to continue sustainable trend of Blue Economy using huge natural and mineral resources in and under the sea and the adjoining areas of the ocean."

She also mentioned the unlimited role of sea resources in various economic activities including poverty alleviation, achieving self-sufficiency in food production, maintaining environmental balance and facing the adverse impacts of climate change.

The Prime Minister stressed creating skilled manpower to exploit the marine resources from within the country's huge sea boundary, saying that the nations utilizing the sea and its resources became more prosperous economically than others.

She mentioned that the Bay of Bengal could determine Bangladesh's future development and economic growth through expansion of international trade, use of marine mineral resources for long-term energy security, proper management of marine fish resources, and protection of biodiversity and marine environment.

"The economy of Bangladesh is totally sea borne and with \$130 billion GDP, Bangladesh's economy is the 44th in the world in terms of GDP," she said.

Hasina said Bangladesh has a dearth of skilled manpower and proper technology for exploring marine resources although it has a huge stock of living and non-living resources available under the seabed and water column.

She also mentioned that as a coastal country, the interests of Bangladesh are associated with the sea, and the main obstacle to establishing rights there was unsettled sea boundary with India and Myanmar.

Hasina said it was her government that ratified the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) in 2001, creating huge opportunity for establishing Bangladesh's rights in the sea on the basis of international laws and regulations.

Not property

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Speaking about the general, Kamal said Osmani was a lifelong supporter of multi-party democracy.

There is no scope for doubts about a basic principle of the constitution like the existence of multiple political parties, he added.

"Osmani's greatest victory through the Liberation War was not merely the land of Bangladesh, but the sovereignty for 7.5 crore people," said Kamal, who was involved in the framing of the constitution.

Liberation War Affairs Minister AKM Mozammel Huq and State Minister for Finance MA Mannan, among others, spoke.

Fakhrul sued

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Matsajibi League, a pro-AL organisation, filed the suit against the BNP leader with the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court of Dhaka.

Taking cognisance of the case, Metropolitan Magistrate Snigdha Rani Chakraborty yesterday asked Paltan Police Station OC to investigate the matter and submit a report to the court within September 15.

"The Awami League is a killer party and its president Sheikh Hasina is a killer too," Fakhrul told a press conference at the BNP Nayapaltan headquarters on August 24.

The comments were published in several newspapers the following day which many AL leaders said tarnished the images of Hasina and the Awami League.

The BNP leader made the remark three days after the prime minister alleged BNP chief Khaleda Zia, her son Tarique Rahman and her cabinet members were involved in the gruesome August 21, 2004, grenade attack on an AL rally in the capital.

Hasina made the allegation at a programme marking the 10th anniversary of the attack.

The grenade attack killed 24 AL