

Najim killing suspect arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police yesterday arrested a person on charge of his involvement in the brutal murder of a teenage boy around four months ago in the capital's Khilkhet area.

The law enforcers said the arrestee, Sharif, 30, has admitted that he was present during the torture of Najim Uddin, 16, on April 13.

Najim's body was recovered from the Shitalakkhya river at Noapara of Rugganj in Narayananj on April 16 and was buried as an unidentified person.

Son of local vegetable vendor Jalal Uddin of Mastul village, Najim was killed by a mob on charge of stealing a pigeon from a neighbour's house.

"A team of Khilkhet police arrested Sharif in Khilkhet area around 2:00pm today [yesterday]. During primary interrogation he admitted that he was present at the scene. But how much he was involved is still to be confirmed," said Jibon Kanti Sarkar, assistant superintendent of police (ASP).

They were going to seek the court's permission to remand the arrestee, he added.

Nazrul Islam, officer-in-charge of Khilkhet police, said they were trying to find out other people involved in the murder.

The police had earlier arrested three people, but none of them was seen taking part in the brutal murder. That gruesome incident was also videotaped and The Daily Star has obtained one of the clips.

The boy was alive till the end of the 5:39-minute-long footage but was later killed and his body was dumped in the nearby Balu river.

His family did not know anything until April 17 when a neighbour, who claimed to have witnessed the incident, told them about it. The Criminal Investigation Department on Wednesday formed a three-member committee led by the assistant superintendent of police to find out the killers as soon as possible.

'Embarrassing' if Congress rejects Iran deal: Kerry

AFP, New York

US Secretary of State John Kerry yesterday said it would be embarrassing to him and a blow to US credibility on the world stage if Congress rejects the Iran nuclear deal.

"Do you think the ayatollah is going to come back to the table if Congress refuses this and negotiate again?" he told the Council of Foreign Relations think tank in New York.

Kerry has spent recent days trying to sell the hard-fought deal to skeptical Americans as the Republican-majority, 535-member House of Representatives has 60 days to review the deal.

Congress can pass a motion of disapproval, which President Barack Obama can veto. An override of the veto requires two-thirds approval in both the House and Senate.

"Do you think that they're going to sit there and other people in the world are going to say, 'hey let's go negotiate with the United States, they have 535 secretaries of state'?", Kerry said.

"I mean, please. I would be embarrassed to try to go out. What am I going to say to people after this as secretary of state? 'Come negotiate with us.' 'Oh, Can you deliver?' Please."

Kerry warned that if Congress rejected the deal, it could make Israel and the United States more isolated.

Cop killed

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Alauddin, 32, was a constable of Peertola Police Outpost under Gangni Police Station. He along with some other policemen tried to stop the vehicle.

On information that a Phensedyl-carrying microbus was coming from Daulatpur upazila of Kushtia, Alauddin, other policemen and Ansar members set up a check-post at Shahebpur roundabout in the upazila around 7:30pm, said Hamidul Alam, superintendent of Meherpur police.

When the cops were trying to block the road with tree trunks, the microbus appeared immediately and its driver sped up and ploughed through them, dragging Alauddin around a kilometre, said the SP.

Though the other cops escaped narrowly by jumping aside, the constable possibly got stuck with the microbus's bumper, he said.

The victim was declared dead after he was rushed to Kushtia Sadar Hospital.

Two sacks of Phensedyl were found beside the place where the killers left Alauddin. They might have left the bags fearing further police checks ahead, the police official said.



With the Eid holidays over, people are returning in droves to the capital. In this photo, thousands of people gather at the Barisal launch terminal to board the vessels.

PHOTO: BANGLAR CHOKH

Odds in favour

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She might choose the top two BCL leaders on the basis of the aspirants' track record over the past few years.

Former BCL General Secretary Mahfuzul Haider Chowdhury Roton said whoever the party chief considered bright and competent would get the leadership of the BCL.

Nazmul said the process of getting new top leaders of the country's oldest student organisation was yet to be finalised.

Asked, Sohag said, "If Chhatra League leaders cannot reach a decision, the new committee will be formed through voting. Preparations have also been made for casting of ballot."

To the surprise of many in the BCL, Sohag and Nazmul announced a total of 40 district and upazila unit committees only a couple of days ago.

Many BCL leaders believe the new committees were announced to make sure that those unit leaders vote in the council for the panel backed by Sohag and Nazmul.

There are also allegations that a section of present and ex-top BCL leaders got the names of their loyal men on the list of councillors -- 25 from each district unit -- to influence the election of the two top BCL leaders.

"The list contains the names of only those loyal to the presidents and general secretaries of the unit committees. They will cast votes on their superiors' instructions," alleged a BCL leader.

Nazmul said they couldn't announce many unit committees for long due to opposition from local AL leaders. "Now committees have been announced to bring dynamism in the units."

Emirati plane brings aid to Yemen's Aden

AFP, Aden

An Emirati plane landed in Aden at dawn on Friday, bringing humanitarian aid to the southern Yemeni city only hours after its airport came under rocket fire from rebels.

The aircraft is the third to land in the port city since the symbolic reopening of the airport on Wednesday, after nearly four months of fierce fighting.

It delivered medical supplies from the Red Cross and United Arab Emirates before departing, an airport official said.

A vital supply artery for war-torn south Yemen, the facility came under fire from the Shiite Huthi rebels on Thursday as a Saudi plane was unloading humanitarian aid on the tarmac.

Overnight, rocket attacks on Aden killed three people and wounded 57, according to Al-Khader Laswar, a health official in the city.

The rockets were fired from north Aden, where the Huthi rebels still have a presence after being driven out of most of the city by fighters loyal to exiled President Abedrabbo Mansour Hadi.

The Saudi-led military coalition that backs Hadi carried out air strikes on Huthi positions in the area during the night, said a tribal source.

Elsewhere, coalition warplanes struck rebel positions in Omran, north of the rebel-held capital Sanaa, and Dhamar in central Yemen, according to residents.

Over the last four years, the BCL saw several hundred internal feuds that left at least 41 BCL men dead and several hundred injured across the country.

The present central committee was formed on July 11, 2011 for two years. Though the BCL was supposed to hold its council in 2013, it couldn't do so.

"Many competent Chhatra League leaders will not get the chance to vie for the posts of BCL president and general secretary for the delay," alleged a BCL leader.

On the allegations that ex-top BCL leaders influence the committee's formation, former BCL president Liaqat Sikder said, "We don't influence or control Chhatra League, rather we as former leaders help the organisation, and will continue to do so."

He said some former BCL leaders, who remained inactive for years and had no role in party activities, became vocal before the BCL council and spew propaganda.

BCL sources said several names had come up as strong contenders for the posts of president and general secretary.

They include BCL Joint General Secretary Shamsul Kabir Rahat, Environment Affairs Secretary Saifur Rahman Sohag, Deputy Law Secretary Biplob Hossain Polash, Assistant Secretary Zakir Hossain, central committee member Enamul Haque Prince, and BCL leaders Shahidul Islam Shahed, Anwar Hossain Anu and Azizul Haque Rana.

Talking to The Daily Star, AL Joint General Secretary Mahbubul Alam Hanif said they wanted to see dedicated, honest and competent students as top BCL leaders.

"Those who are involved in anti-organisational activities and don't have good image among students should not be Chhatra League leaders," he said.

BCL Election Commissioner Sheikh Rasel said they sold 241 nomination forms for Tk 3,000 each for the posts of president and general secretary.

He said the names of 14 aspirants for BCL presidency and 21 for general secretary's post were dropped from the list of candidates upon scrutiny of the candidates' age, studentship and marital status.

Jubo League

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suspended for his alleged involvement in activities against the organisation's rules, said a Jubo League statement signed by its Office Secretary Kazi Anisur Rahman.

The other arrestees are - Mizanur Rahman Manik, Mohammad Selim, Khairul Alam Tuhin, Mohammad Russel, and Kazi Sohail.

Meanwhile, a Dhaka court yesterday granted one-day remand for each after police sought a three-day remand for each of them, said Mohsin Ali, sub-inspector of Motijheel Police Station. The Rab handed the arrestees over to this police station.

Rajuk had floated the tender of Tk 30 crore for the construction of internal roads and surface drains at different sectors of Purbachal New Town Project.

Earlier this month, 10 alleged ruling party men were awarded different terms of imprisonment for extorting money from businessmen of a supermarket in the capital's Tikatuli.

Jubo league expelled its Publication Secretary Iqbal Mahmud from the organisation for his involvement in the extortion.

Turkey bombs

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On Monday 32 people were killed in a suicide blast in Suruc, a Turkish town on the Syrian border that the government blamed on ISIS.

The bombing raid was the first by the Turkish air force on ISIS since the extremists began their advance across Iraq and Syria in 2013, seizing control of swathes of territory right up to the Turkish border.

It also came as Turkey, after months of negotiations, finally gave the green light for the US to use a key air base in its south for air strikes against ISIS.

After taking off from the southeastern Turkish city of Diyarbakir three Turkish F-16 planes dropped four guided bombs against three ISIS targets, a statement from the prime minister's office said.

The Turkish war planes dropped their charges while in Turkish airspace and did not enter Syrian airspace, the CNN-Turk television channel reported.

"An operation was carried out against targets belonging to Daesh inside the Syrian border," the official statement said, using an Arabic acronym for the group.

The planes struck just before 4:00am local time (0100 GMT) and then returned to their base.

On Thursday, one Turkish soldier was killed and two sergeants wounded in the Kilis region by fire from ISIS militants on the Syrian side of the border. A jihadist was also reported killed.

Turkish tanks then responded by opening fire on ISIS targets in Syria.

Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu said that the Turkish war planes were "100 percent" successful in eliminating their targets.

"Turkey will show the strongest reaction to the slightest movement that threatens it," he said.

"The operation against ISIS reached its target and will not stop," he added.

First malaria

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The World Health Organisation still needs to assess whether to recommend the use of the drug for children.

The new jab works by provoking an immune response in the body following the introduction of the virus into the body by a mosquito. The jab hopes to prevent the disease multiplying in the victim's liver, which leads to blood infections, fever, aching and sometimes death.

While scientists on the project are optimistic, previous trials have yielded mixed results: trial data in 2011 and 2012 showed only reduced episodes of malaria in babies aged six to 12 weeks, although this percentage improved in data from children aged five to 17 months.

The vaccine, which has cost GSK an estimated \$300million, is not the complete answer to malaria -- but scientists hope it will provide a "meaningful contribution" to fighting the deadly disease.

Joe Cohen, a GSK scientist who has led the development of Mosquirix since 1987, said he had no reservations about the drug, saying it would have a "tremendous" effect on fighting malaria.

"It will have an enormously significant public health impact," he told Sky News.

In an apparent bid to crack down on all sources of violence, Turkish police yesterday swooped on suspected members of ISIS group and the militant Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK).

A total of 297 people including 37 foreigners were detained, Davutoglu said, adding that the raids took place in 16 provinces across Turkey.

As well as ISIS and the PKK, the operation targeted suspected members of the PKK's youth wing, The Patriotic Revolutionary Youth Movement (YDG-H), and the Marxist Revolutionary People's Liberation Party Front (DHKP-C).

A female member of the DHKP-C was killed in Istanbul in clashes with police during the raids, Turkish media said.

Two police had been shot dead in southeast Turkey close to the Syrian border on Wednesday, in an attack claimed by the PKK's military wing which said it wanted to avenge the Suruc bombing.

On Thursday, another policeman was killed in the majority Kurdish city of Diyarbakir.

Turkey has been accused of colluding with ISIS extremists in the hope they might further Ankara's aim of toppling Syrian President Bashar al-Assad.

Ankara has always vehemently denied the claims but Nato member Turkey has dodged playing a full role in the US-led coalition assisting Kurds fighting IS militants, much to the chagrin of its Western allies.

Now, however, Ankara has finally given the green light to US forces for the use of its Incirlik base for air strikes against ISIS in Syria and Iraq, American officials said Thursday.

The Hurriyet daily said the agreement for US planes to use the base envisages a 90-kilometre (56 mile) no-fly zone between the Syrian towns of Marea and Jarabulus to the east.

Only tipping can get

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month and a half.

Although he was not in need of any emergency treatment, he had to be carried on a trolley for his inability to walk.

When police bring any patient to the hospital, he's usually carried by policemen or his attendants, said an Ansar member, who works at the hospital, preferring anonymity.

There are frequent allegations that the hospital's trolley men do not offer patients any service unless they are tipped Tk 100 to Tk 500 or even more. Some of them are hospital staffs and some hired but all of them push the attendants for tips, according to sources.

The hospital authorities, however, seem unwilling to take any action against them.

SHORTAGE OF TROLLEYS

Around half an hour before Akhi arrived in front of DMCH, one Jewel Rana was seen waiting to carry his brother-in-law Sanwar Hossain to the emergency unit. Sanwar's right leg was broken in an accident in Shariatpur, but there was no trolley left to his utter dismay.

After waiting for around 10 minutes, Jewel pulled Sanwar up in his hands and carried him into the room of emergency medical officer (EMO).

By then, this correspondent saw

4 of a family

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they were collecting the fishes around 12:30pm. Hay's two daughters met the same fate as they tried to rescue Hye and Khalil, said ASM Masduzzaman, officer-in-charge of Bauphal Police Station.

Meanwhile, the authorities of Patuakhali Palli Bidyut Samity suspended Siddiquir Rahman, in charge of its Kalishury office, for his alleged negligence of duty in connection with the incident.

The Samity also formed a three-member probe body, headed by its Deputy General Manager Shah Alam, to investigate the incident and asked the body to submit its report within three days.

They already started work in this regard, the probe body chief said adding that departmental steps would be taken against the persons responsible for the incident if there were any.

Foez Ahmed, additional superintendent of police in Patuakhali, visited the spot.

EC officials

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that the reports are scrutinised and legal action can be taken for false information, if any.

"If the annual audit reports of political parties can be thoroughly scrutinised, transparency will be ensured in the financial dealings of the political parties, and it will curb corruption," said SM Ezaharul Haque, regional election officer (REO) of Sylhet.

Before each parliamentary poll, the EC sets a ceiling of electoral expenditures for each candidate but in most cases, the candidates spend several times as much and there is no mechanism to properly check it.

Suvash Chandara Sarker, REO of Rajshahi region, said after elections candidates stated that small amounts of money were spent, which was false.

In the 10th parliamentary election last year, the ceiling of expenditure was Tk 25 lakh but many spent more than Tk 1 crore.

"So there needs to be an effective mechanism to check the expenses when the campaign is going on... Legal action must be taken if anyone violates the rule," he suggested.

Besides, some officers recommended reintroduction of 'no' vote in the parliamentary poll.

"In many cases, people do not find suitable candidates. At that time, the voters can express their opinion through 'no' votes," said Bibhor Kumar Biswas, REO of Comilla region.

The provision of 'no' vote was scrapped in 2008.

On June 10, the EC sent letters to the REOs seeking their recommendations on possible changes to the RPO. At least six REOs, out of 10 across the country, gave similar suggestions following discussions with the district level election officers.

EC Secretary Sirazul Islam admitted that checking electoral expenses was still a major challenge.

"We have got the recommendations and will place those before the commissioners for further action," he told The Daily Star.

Former Chief Election Commissioner ATM Shamsul Huda, during his tenure from 2007 to 2012, acknowledged that controlling the use of black money remained a major challenge in holding fair elections.

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) Trustee M Hafizuddin Khan said, "Scrutiny of these financial statements is very much important for ensuring transparency and accountability."