

Lax probe led to latest attacks

FROM PAGE 1
Oyasiqur Rahman, Ananta Bijoy Das and Niladri Chattopadhyay -- were stabbed to death in seven months since February this year.

Law enforcers have little to show for, they said.

Investigators were yet to submit charge sheets in the Avijit, Niladri and Ananta murder cases. All they did was arrest a handful of suspects.

Detectives did submit a charge sheet against five people in the Oyasiqur killing case but two of the accused were on the run.

Yesterday, assailants stabbed to death Faisal Arefin Dipan, owner of Jagriti Prokashoni, at Shahbagh the very day publisher Ahmedur Rashid Tutul of Shuddhoswar Prokashoni and two bloggers were attacked in Lalmatia.

Both were Avijit's publishers. "It cannot go like this," said Prof Ajoy Roy, father of Avijit. "They have killed authors. Now they are after the publishers."

Prof Roy believes Tutul and Faisal were the targets of the criminals as they were friends of Avijit and had published his books.

Muntasirul Islam, deputy commissioner (media) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, said eight people were arrested in connection with Avijit's murder and four in connection with Niladri's killing.

For the Avijit killing case, they have sent some pieces of evidence to the FBI for tests. The Detective Branch was yet to receive any results, he added.

Avijit was stabbed and slashed to death near TSC of Dhaka University on February 26 after his wife Rafida Ahmed Banya and he got out of the Amar Ekushey Bô Mela. Rafida was badly injured in the attack.

In August, Rab detained three peo-

ple, including Touhidur Rahman, a Bangladesh-born UK citizen, and said they were behind the killings of Avijit and Ananta.

Rab claimed Touhidur had masterminded the killings.

Touhidur's family refuted the claim and said he was picked up by law enforcers in plainclothes from his Dhanmondi home long before the day Rab had mentioned as the day of his detention.

Earlier, law enforcers arrested Shafiqur Rahman Farabi, a former Hizbut Tahrir leader, in connection with Avijit's murder. But they have not yet been able to establish Farabi's link with the murder.

Blogger Ananta, also an activist of Sylhet Gonojagoran Mancha, was stabbed to death in broad daylight by a group of assailants in Sylhet on May 12.

A CID team arrested Idris, a photo-journalist of the Daily Sabuj Sylhet, in this connection and had him on remand but they could not find any link between him and the murder and he was let go, according to sources.

Debashish Debu, spokesperson of Sylhet Gonojagoran Mancha, said CID's inefficiency had triggered frustration among freethinkers in Sylhet.

The latest incidents could have been avoided had the police been efficient in unearthing the mystery and capturing the killers of Ananta and the others, he added.

Special Superintendent (organised crime) Mirza Abdullah Baqui of CID claimed that they had identified a number of the suspects.

Blogger Oyasiqur too was hacked to death in broad daylight in the capital's Tejgaon area on March 30.

Locals chased and caught two madrasa students and handed them over to police while another suspect

was detained at a checkpoint in Wari two days before the murder. The two students had told police that he was supposed to be with them during the murder.

A Dhaka court on September 30 took cognisance of the charges against five members of banned militant outfit Ansarullah Bangla Team (ABT) in connection with the killing. Two key accused are still at large.

Niladri, a Gonojagoran Mancha activist, is the fourth blogger hacked to death. Four clever-wielding youths killed him at his Goran flat on August 7.

Police arrested three people, including a nephew of the State Minister for Labour and Employment Mujibul Haque Chhunu, in connection with the murder six days later.

Niladri's friend Devjyoti Rudro said he got in touch with detectives to know about the probe progress a month ago. But he was told that investigators were doing their job and that they would inform Niladri's family once any significant progress was made.

Law enforcers have some success in the blogger Ahmed Rajib Haider murder case. Rajib was attacked on February 15, 2013, in the capital's Pallabi.

The police pressed charges against eight ABT members, including prime accused and ABT chief Mufti Jasimuddin Rahmani.

The case is now under trial.

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal told the BBC Bangla service that they have captured almost all the key suspects of the murders. Some of them are at large.

"We will capture the people behind these new murders too," he said adding that it was needed to be investigated as to why these crimes were being committed.

Freethinking mauled



Publisher Ahmedur Rashid Tutul between authors Avijit Roy and Rafida Ahmed Banya at Amar Ekushey Bô Mela on February 26. A little later, Avijit was stabbed and killed at TSC intersection and his wife Banya seriously injured. Tutul was attacked yesterday in Lalmatia and is in a critical condition.

PHOTO: FACEBOOK

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Khaza Abdul Gafur, assistant director of DMCH told The Daily Star last night.

Police suspect the two attacks took place in between 2:30pm to 3:30pm.

Later around 9:30, a group identifying itself as "Ansar Al Islam (AQIS Bangladesh)," claimed responsibility for the twin incidents through an email sent to different media outlets.

"These secular and atheist publishers waged war against religion of Islam in every possible ways," it said, threatening to annihilate anyone who would dare stand against Islam.

The sender identified himself as Mufti Abdullah Ashraf, spokesperson for "Ansar Al Islam (al-Qaeda in Indian Subcontinent, Bangladesh Chapter)".

In August, a group using the same name claimed responsibility for the murder of blogger Niloy Chowdhury Neel, one of the four secularist bloggers hacked to death by suspected militants.

Of the other three, Avijit Roy was murdered in February, Oyasiqur Rahman in March and Ananta Bijoy Das in May.

Asked about yesterday's email, Muntasirul Islam, deputy commissioner (Media) of DMP, told The Daily Star around 10:00pm that he learnt about it from TV scrolls but didn't get anything officially.

The attacks on the two publishers were carried out in a similar style, according to police, witnesses and the family of one of the victims.

After the attacks, the doors of both the houses were found locked -- Jagriti office from inside and Shuddhoswar from outside.

Dipan's body was recovered around 6:00pm by other shop owners after the door was opened with a key collected from an employee of the publishing house. Around 7:20pm, as police took his body to Dhaka Medical College Hospital, doctors declared him dead.

Police rescued Tutul and the two bloggers after breaking open the door and took them to DMCH.

Both Jagriti and Shuddhoswar published books written by Avijit Roy and both Dipan and Tutul had received threats on several occasions after Avijit's killing, said their friends and colleagues.

Tutul towards the end of February filed a general diary with Mohammadpur Police Station, expressing security concerns, according to police sources.

"My son had no enemy. He caused nobody any harm. The only reason behind the killing is he [Dipan] had published Avijit's books," Prof Abul

Quasem Fazlul Huq, father of Dipan, told reporters.

"I don't want any trial. I want good sense to prevail. Both sides -- the one doing politics using secularism and the other doing politics state religion -- are pushing the country towards destruction."

Dipan left behind his wife Dr Razia, one son Ridad and a daughter Ridma. Ridad, a class-VIII student, is scheduled to take JSC examination today.

AS IT HAPPENED
Sheikh Maruf Hassan, additional commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) told reporters that both the attacks were carried out possibly by two separate groups.

"We are not in a position to say whether the two groups follow same ideology. The wounds of the victims of the both incident are seemed alike," he said.

Abul Quasem Fazlul Huq, a professor of Bangla department at Dhaka University, said his son left the house of his sister on Fuller Road around 1:30pm and went to the office, located on the second floor of the shopping centre, a hub for alternative writers and publishers.

He called Dipan at 3:30pm over the phone several times, but none answered. Worried, Fazlul Huq went to his office and found the glass door was locked from inside.

He left the place thinking that Dipan might be busy with something important and had kept the door locked to avoid disturbance, something he often did in the past.

The father then went to Dipan's house at the teachers' quarters of Sufia Kamal Hall on Dhaka University campus. Dipan's wife Razia Rahman, senior medical officer at the Dhaka University Medical Centre, then broke the news of the Lalmatia incident to him.

When Fazlul Huq told her of his visit to Dipan's office, they rushed to Aziz Super Market.

By the time they reached there around 6:00pm, some shop owners had already gathered in front of the office room and were opening the door, said Nazmul Ahsan, president of the shop owners' association of the market.

When Fazlul Huq entered the office, he found his son lying on the floor face down, in a massive pool of blood, in front of the chair he used to sit on and work.

Tutul, owner of Shuddhoswar publishing house, was talking to secular writer Ranadipam Basu and Tareq Rahim, a secular blogger and software engineer, inside his office on the third-floor of the five-storey building.

Besides, Russell, a staff of the publication house, and Wasiqul Haque, an employee of online newspaper bdnews24.com were at the reception.

Hearing a knock on the entrance of the office around 3:00pm, Rasel opened the door and saw a boy, aged around 17-18, standing outside, said Deputy Commissioner Biplob Kumar Sarker of Dhaka Metropolitan Police at the spot after the incident.

The boy said he had come from Sylhet and wanted to talk about buying books. He was carrying a diary. As he entered the room, another boy of the same age followed him inside, police said.

Suddenly, one of two drew out a gun and took Russell and Wasiqul to another room at gunpoint and locked it from outside.

Then the attackers entered Tutul's room and started hacking the three with machetes. Gun shots were also fired and Tareque was hit with a bullet. Within a few minutes, they left the place leaving the victims severely injured.

Ranadipam, however, told The Daily Star at Dhaka Medical College Hospital that there were three attackers.

In a desperate attempt to seek help, injured blogger Ranadipam posted a status on his Facebook page minutes after the attackers left. "They hacked us -- Tutul, Tareq and me," it read.

About the Lalmatia incident, DC Biplob Sarker said, "Somebody from the neighbourhood called me around 3:00pm and said something happened and asked me to send police. The police reached there within 5-7 minutes of the call."

Reaching there, police found the apartment door was locked from outside. "I told them [over the phone] to break into the flat immediately. They found three critically injured men -- one lying on the floor and two others sitting on two chairs."

Since Rasel and Wasiqul were inside another room, they didn't know what was going on. "They heard footsteps. They heard screams. The whole thing happened within a few minutes," Biplob said.

Police found an unused bullet and a cartridge from there.

Syed Golam Morshed, who lives in another apartment on the same floor, said three or four families live in the building while the rest were rented out for offices and coaching centres. The building has no security guard.

While visiting the spot, this correspondent found blood splattered on the floor. There were blood stains on the stairs as well.

No cases were filed as of 3:00am today.



The cover photo of publisher Ahmedur Rashid Tutul's Facebook page is an image of deceased Prof Humayun Azad, who was attacked by fundamentalists, and slain writers Rajib, Avijit, Oyasiqur and Ananta. The last person in the image has no face as nobody knew who would be next.

IMAGE: FACEBOOK

'Crime' was rooting for freethinking

FROM PAGE 1
secular-humanist writer Humayun Azad who too was brutally attacked by militants in February 2004.

Another publisher of Avijit, who has published three of Avijit's books, told this correspondent, "They were just publishers like me. They did not write any book and, perhaps, they did not even read all the books of Avijit that they published."

On condition of anonymity, he said when the news of Dipan's death spread at Dhaka Medical College Hospital, writers and publishers gathered there forced him out of the hospital fearing he too would be attacked. He has since holed himself up.

He said threats on the lives of the two publishers were much circulated on Facebook.

According to one of Tutul's writer friends, who wished anonymity, Tutul reported being followed by some people and sought police protection.

"Wherever I go, I feel I'm being followed," he quoted Tutul as saying.

Wishing anonymity, two of Dipan's writer friends said Dipan complained of being followed by unknown men.

Both Tutul and Dipan joined protests after Avijit was murdered and were very vocal in bringing the perpetrators to book in many of their Facebook posts, their friends and families said.

Born in Sylhet, Tutul used to blog in somewhereinblog and Sachalayatan. He formed Shuddhaswor in 2002. He is married with two daughters.

Dipan, son of Dhaka University professor Abul Quasem Fazlul Huq, was born and brought up in the univer-

sity area.

Dipan had a son and a daughter. He founded Jagriti Prokashoni in December 1992. He was a good friend of Avijit.

His family sources said he was determined to be a publisher from his early life.

Two writers, Ranadipom Basu and Tareq Rahim, were also severely injured when Tutul was attacked.

Tutul published two of Ranadipom's books, including one on the atheist philosophy of Charbak.

Ranadipam, a very close friend and aide of Tutul, has his own blog on wordpress. He also blogs in muktomona, Sachalayatan, somewhereinblog, amarblog and nirmaan, according to his Facebook profile.

Ahmedur Rashid Tutul
October 15 at 4:08pm Edited

লেখক খুন, ধর্মীয় উদ্ভাদনা ইত্যাদি ঘটনার প্রতিবাদে সাম্প্রতিক সময়ে ভারতের লেখকরা তাদের অর্জিত পুরস্কার এবং সম্মাননা ফিরিয়ে দিয়ে, প্রত্যাখ্যান করে বিবেকের কাছে দায়বদ্ধতার নতির স্থাপন করেছেন। অভিবাদন সেই লেখকদের।

বাংলাদেশে গত তিন বছরে শুধু লেখার জন্য খুন হয়েছেন বেশ কয়েকজন লেখক। অনেক লেখক খুনের হুমকি নিয়ে জীবন কাটাচ্ছেন। গেলো ফেব্রুয়ারিতে বইমেলায় প্রকাশ্যে অভিজিৎ রায় নিহত হওয়ার পর আমাদের বেশিরভাগ পরিচিত লেখকই মুখ খুলেননি, প্রতিবাদ জানাননি। রাজিব হায়দার, ওয়াশিকুর রহমান, অনন্ত বিজয় দাশ, নীলাদ্রি নীল, এদের কারোর জন্যই যাদের করার কথা তারা কেউ এমন কিছু করেননি যাতে রাষ্ট্রের এবং সমাজের টনক নড়তে পারে। এই দীনতা খুব লম্বা, খুব আতঙ্কের.....!

125 Likes 12 Comments 5 Shares

Ahmedur Rashid Tutul
June 27 Edited

বাহ! তবুও দিনে একজন; এমন ঘোষণা এখনো আসেনি। কি আর করা, গর্দনে যি লাগিয়ে অপেক্ষায় থাকি.....

আনসারুল্লাহর লক্ষ্য মাসে একটি খুন

ছোট ছোট লক্ষ্যবস্তুর ঠিক করে নিয়মিত বিরতিতে, সম্ভব হলে প্রতি মাসে একটি করে খুনের ঘটনা ঘটতে চায় আনসারুল্লাহ বাংলা টিম। তাদের বিবেচনায় যেসব ব্যক্তি ইসলামবিরোধী, তাদের ওপর হামলা চালাতে সংগঠনের মতাদর্শ উদ্বুদ্ধদের নির্দেশনা দেওয়া হয়েছে। সাম্প্রতিক কালে গ্রেপ্তার হওয়া আনসারুল্লাহর...

PROTHOM-ALO.COM

24 Likes 1 Comment

Status update, top, of publisher Ahmedur Rashid Tutul where he talks about Indian writers rejecting awards protesting the killing of authors and religious fanaticism. He shared a Prothom Alo report where it was claimed that Ansarullah Bangla Team wants to kill one writer every month.

IMAGE: FACEBOOK

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