

Fazle Kabir

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Atiur Rahman resigned over the cyber heist of \$101 million from the central bank's account with the Federal Reserve Bank of New York.

Kabir, now in Washington, will return home on March 18 and join the central bank, Finance Minister AMA Muhith told reporters at the secretariat in the capital.

He began his career in 1980 as assistant traffic superintendent of Bangladesh Railway under Bangladesh Civil Service. Three years later, he joined the Administration Service, according to Sonali Bank website.

During his 34 years in civil bureaucracy, Kabir served in various key positions at different ministries as well as in the field administration.

He served as deputy commissioner and district magistrate of Kishoreganj, joint secretary at the education ministry, director general of the National Academy for Planning and Development, director general of the BCS Administration Academy and secretary of the railway ministry before joining as finance secretary in 2012.

Kabir, who obtained his BA (honours) and master's degree in economics from Chittagong University, also served as director in Janata Bank from 2008 to 2010 and Bangladesh Bank from 2012 to 2014.

He represented Bangladesh in many conferences abroad and actively participated in state-level negotiations at home and abroad. He led the Bangladesh delegation in the finance and budget committee sessions at the United Nations in October 2008.

Kabir acquired professional expertise by participating in a number of in-country training on policy planning and management at Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre, and National Defence Course and Capstone Course at the National Defence College.

Htin Kyaw

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Thursday the NLD nominated Htin Kyaw for the role. He runs a charity founded by Suu Kyi and has been a trusted member of her inner circle since the mid-1990s. He is not a lawmaker.

"Today's result is because of the love of people for her. It is the victory of my sister Aung San Suu Kyi," Htin Kyaw told reporters after the vote.

The NLD's sizeable majority ensured a comfortable win for Suu Kyi's pick in a vote by both houses of parliament. Htin Kyaw received 360 of the 652 votes cast.

Suu Kyi was the first member of parliament to vote and clapped and smiled when the result was announced. Outgoing President Thein Sein issued a statement congratulating the man who will replace him on April 1.

"On behalf of the nation and the people, I take pride in your being elected as the president," Thein Sein said in the statement.

NLD lawmakers, most of whom have no experience as members of parliament, spent time rehearsing how they would vote the night before the election, a Reuters witness said.

They were keen to ensure there were no last minute mistakes that would cost them a presidency they had campaigned for decades to see.

"This is the big day for us," Zar Ni Min, an NLD lower house MP, said after the vote. "This is what we have hoped for a long time ago."

Yanghee Lee, the UN Special Rapporteur on human rights in Myanmar, said that despite the celebrations there was no time for complacency because Myanmar had hundreds of laws that were out of line with its international obligations, and people could be sentenced to hard labour for "all kinds of reasons".

The change of government was also a chance to break the "tragic status quo situation" of a million Muslims from the Rohingya minority in Myanmar's Rakhine state, who had been deprived of their most fundamental rights, she said.

Tens of thousands of Rohingyas have fled poverty and persecution in western Myanmar since religious violence erupted in 2012, and Lee told a news conference in Geneva she was afraid more would flee in the 2016 sailing season.

While little known outside Myanmar, Htin Kyaw commands considerable respect inside the country, partly because his father was a legendary writer and early member of the NLD.

Though he has never previously stood for political office, he is married to sitting NLD MP Su Su Lwin, whose late father was the party's respected spokesman, and he helps run Suu Kyi's charitable foundation.

A new cabinet, set to be announced at the end of the month, is expected to include figures from across the political spectrum as Suu Kyi tries to promote national reconciliation.

It will face many challenges, including poverty, civil wars in ethnic minority borderlands and decrepit infrastructure.

But one of the most crucial tasks will be to manage the relationship with the military, which retains significant power including control of the vital home, defence and border ministries.

It was like a militant attack

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might throw the country's economy into a major crisis.

"So, I took advice and opinions from the experts, and hired experts from abroad very quickly. I did so to beef up security of the [foreign exchange payment] system and prevent any further damage."

In his attempt to find out the source of the cyber attack and how it was pulled off, Atiur said he took the intelligence agencies, the Rapid Action Battalion, the Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) and the World Bank officials on board.

"On the first day, I filed an FIR with the FIU. I worked as per their advice."

He said he also spoke to the central bank governor of the Philippines, where part of the stolen money was laundered through casinos. The rest of the money ended up in Sri Lanka.

"As it was a confidential matter, things like these had to be done in secret... It took some time."

Atiur, who was a development studies professor at Dhaka University before he was appointed the BB governor in May 2009, drew ire from Finance Minister AMA Muhith for not informing him about the theft. Muhith claimed to have learnt of it from media reports, that too more than a month after the incident.

In his defence, Atiur said, "I have tried my best to set up a firewall because attacks like this can happen any time, like an earthquake."

"When the situation came under my control to some extent, I informally informed the higher authorities about the case. Then I wrote a letter to the honourable finance minister informing him about the issue."

Had the news been broken immediately after, he might not have been able to bring back part of the money because the hackers would have become more cautious, claimed the 10th governor of the central bank.

Part of the stolen money that ended up in Sri Lanka has been recovered.

"But by the grace of the Almighty, we have got back a significant portion. We have news from the Philippines that we will get back the whole amount [laundered there]," Atiur said.

"I took the time for the sake of the country, for bringing back the money and for averting any further major crisis," Atiur said.

Questions were raised over his March 10-14 visit to New Delhi to attend an event at a time when mysteries over the cyber theft were unfolding.

Asked about this, he said, "It was an inter-governmental meeting organised by the IMF [International Monetary Fund] and the finance ministry of India. Finance Minister AMA Muhith too was scheduled to attend the meeting but he could not go there on health grounds."

"I went to India with permission from the prime minister and the finance minister."

On the sidelines of the IMF meeting, he held talks on how the money could be recovered, said Atiur.

He especially thanked the finance minister and the central bank governor

of Sri Lanka for helping Bangladesh recover \$20 million of the stolen money.

Until the cyber heist, Atiur had been basking in the glory of maintaining a strong macroeconomic scenario in Bangladesh for a long time despite turbulence in the world markets.

During his stint as the BB governor, the size of the economy doubled, the foreign currency reserves quadrupled, inflation came down, and the interest rates declined.

"Bangladesh is now one of the two fastest growing economies in the world," he said.

The BB is the first institution that introduced e-tendering and e-commerce, and made all payment systems online in Bangladesh.

He said he also tried to bring the underprivileged under the banking system.

"I have always worked in the best interest of the country," said an emotional Atiur.

"The \$28 billion [reserves] is like a child to me. I have piled this up inch by inch."

When he took over as governor in 2009, the reserves stood at less than \$6.5 billion.

He said his job did not allow him to spend much time with his family. "I did not take leave even for a single day in the last seven years."

Atiur thanked Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for her cooperation and guidance during his tenure. "She was on my side during every crisis."

He said he now plans to go back to teaching.

"I will be beside the poor and the farmers. I will protect the sons of the soil," he said while wiping his tears.

As per software security firm Kaspersky Lab, Bangladesh, among all the countries, is most vulnerable to malware attacks and other cyber crimes.

When his attention was drawn to this, Atiur said he had taken some measures to ensure the cyber security of the country. "More remains to be done. Cyber security should be given the highest level of attention, like we have done in case of disaster management."

He thanked the private banks, which he said were under his full control.

These banks, he said, have come up with new and innovative products for companies, small and medium enterprises, and women entrepreneurs.

"I am proud of them. I hope these banks will continue with this new trend of banking," he told reporters at a farewell press briefing at his Gulshan residence later in the day.

The state-run banks have problems, Atiur said. "I have tried to bring discipline by appointing observers to these banks. I hope the government will take care of these banks."

He also expressed gratitude to the finance minister for his support over the past seven years.

Atiur went on to thank the officials and employees of the BB and all other banks for making the inclusive financing and the mobile financial services a success.

Death warrant for Nizami

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said, adding that some convicted war criminals had sought review of the SC judgments on them, but no review petition was allowed.

Meanwhile, Nizami's principal lawyer Khandker Mahbub Hossain told this newspaper that his client would file a review petition with the SC within the deadline.

There are sufficient evidence and documents for reviewing the judgment against Nizami, he claimed.

If the review petition is rejected, the last option for Nizami will be to seek presidential mercy.

In October 2014, the ICT-1 gave Nizami death penalty on four charges and life imprisonment on four more charges. He then challenged the ICT-1 verdict at the apex court.

The SC on January 6 this year unanimously upheld the death penalty of Nizami for masterminding the killing of intellectuals and his involvement in two incidents of mass killing of over 500 people in Pabna in 1971.

A four-member SC bench headed by Chief Justice Surendra Kumar Sinha upheld his death sentence on three charges and life imprisonment on two charges. It, however, acquitted him of the other three charges.

The other three judges of the bench are Justice Nazmun Ara Sultana, Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain and Justice Hasan Foez Siddique.

Nizami is the third former minister after Jamaat leader Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojaheed and BNP leader Salauddin Quader Chowdhury to get death penalty for his notorious role during the 1971 war.

Jamaat secretary general Mojaheed, who was also the Al-Badr chief, was executed on November 22 last year.

SC OBSERVATIONS

The apex court in its full verdict on Nizami's appeal said Nizami, being the leader of Al-Badr Bahini, had the "authority and effective control over

the members of this Bahini and he acquiesced all their atrocious activities" including the killing of intellectuals in 1971.

He had not only sided with the Pakistani occupation army but also "incited the members of Al-Badr Bahini to and Islami Chhatra Shangkha to cooperate with the Pakistan army" during the Liberation War, it observed.

"It has been proved further that the accused appellant [Nizami] gave order to Al-Badr to kill Martyr Dr Abdul Alim -- the husband of PW 13 [Shyamoli Nasrin Chowdhury] and accordingly the Al-Badr took away Dr Abdul Alim from his house on 15.12.1971 and killed him brutally. The appellant thus has clearly incurred the criminal liability for the crimes of intellectuals' killing by the Al-Badr", said the SC in its 153-page judgment.

It said Nizami, being a very active political leader at that time, had full knowledge about those atrocities. "But in spite of that, he, instead of prohibiting or discouraging the members of his Al-Badr Bahini, had continued giving speeches praising and encouraging them and also urging them to cooperate with the Pakistani army."

In those speeches, he addressed the pro-liberation people and freedom fighters as "betrayers", "miscreants", "enemy of the country", "agent of India", etc. and urged the Al-Badr and Rajakars to take revenge and to exterminate the enemies of the country, the SC judgment said.

The SC said Nizami was found to have committed a series of crimes of extremely cruel and inhuman nature during the Liberation War.

"The commission of series of crimes of most cruel and inhuman nature by an accused may be considered as aggravating circumstances for awarding him the maximum sentence," it said.

Google's AI

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been the mighty challenge of machine against humanity.

And the victory of the computer has led to some introspection. One South Korean newspaper complained that the contest was "lopsided" with the single Korean pitted against the corporate might of Google and its "army of super-smart people armed with unfathomable computing power".

In a spirit of magnanimity, however, the Korea Baduk Association - which governs the game of Go - has decided to give an honorary ninth-rank to AlphaGo.

The 4-1 mechanical victory has also made some Go players doubt themselves. The European champion who lost last year to AlphaGo said it had really knocked his self-confidence, even as it enabled him to climb up the world rankings.

Go was invented about 2,500 years or so ago in China. Until now, it has always had a human best player. Not any more. The five match challenge began in Seoul on 9 March, where AlphaGo scored its first victory.

After losing the second match, Lee Se-dol said he was "speechless" adding that the AlphaGo machine played a "nearly perfect game". In the third game commentators said that Lee Se-dol had brought his "top game" but that AlphaGo had won "in great style".

DeepMind's winning streak meant it won the \$1m (£702,000) prize on offer. Google said the money would be donated to Unicef, Stem (science, technology, engineering, and maths) charities and Go organisations.

Court asks

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Rafique-Ul Huq and advocate Abdul Based Majumder, told the SC that Minister Qamrul was abroad for an official visit and would appear before the court any day after March 16.

Earlier in the day, Minister Mozammel appeared before the court in compliance with the SC's March 8 order.

Abdul Based Majumder told reporters that both ministers offered unconditional apology to the SC for their comments about the chief justice and that they would appear before the court on March 20 in connection with the contempt rule.

Qamrul on Monday and Mozammel yesterday submitted two separate petitions with the SC through their lawyers Syed Mamun Mahbub and Abdul Baset Majumder offering unconditional apology.

The two ministers on March 5 and the following day criticised the chief justice after the CJ expressed dissatisfaction over "poor performance" of prosecutors and investigators of the International Crimes Tribunal in dealing with the war crimes case against Mir Quasem.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at a recent cabinet meeting slammed the two ministers, who were present at the meeting, for their comments, and said she and her government would not own such comments.

On March 8, the nine-member apex court bench issued the contempt rule on the two ministers and asked them to explain by March 14 their "derogatory and highly contemptuous statements" and appear before it on March 15.

Community clinics

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students, interns, doctors and nurses.

Habib-a-Millat, member of the parliamentary sub-committee on safe motherhood and safe delivery, said child marriage is a major cause of maternal mortality in the country.

Mohammad Wahid Hossain, director general of the Directorate of Family Planning, said family welfare visitors and assistants, who used to provide door to door services in remote villages, could be used to inform people of the midwifery services available at union sub-centres and upazila health complexes.

"What would you do with logistic support if there is no caring hand for the patients?" said Health and Family Welfare Minister Mohammad Nasim, urging the new midwifery graduates present at the discussion, to work sincerely at their postings.

He also assured that the government would address the needs in this field step by step.

Abdul Quayum, associate editor of Prothom Alo, moderated the discussion.

US police probe if Trump 'incited riot'

AFP, Miami

North Carolina authorities said Monday they are looking into whether Republican presidential frontrunner Donald Trump incited a riot at a rally where a black protester was punched in the face by a supporter.

It comes after a weekend of violent clashes and protests at Trump events and ahead of "Super Tuesday 2," with Democratic and Republican primary contests in the states of Florida, Illinois, Missouri, North Carolina and Ohio.

John McGraw, 78, was charged with assault, battery and disorderly conduct after sucker-punching Rakeem Jones at a chaotic Trump rally on Wednesday in Fayetteville, North Carolina.

CHAIRMAN POSTS IN 31 UPS

No one to contest AL candidates

STAR REPORT

Thirty-one ruling Awami League-nominated chairman candidates are all set to be elected unopposed in the second phase of union parishad polls on March 31.

Neither any political party-nominated nor any independent candidate is contesting those union parishads polls, which are mostly in Gopalganj, Joypurhat, Jessore, Bhola, Madaripur, Kishoreganj, Munshiganj, Sherpur and Sirajganj.

Besides, the BNP has no candidates in 79 out of total 643 unions, which will go to the polls in the second phase, according to Election Commission documents.

Of the 79 UPs, the BNP could not nominate its candidates in some unions. Some nomination papers of the party candidates were cancelled after scrutiny, and some aspirants withdrew their nomination papers, according to EC officials.

Seventeen registered political parties, out of 40, are participating in the second phase of polls. The number of total chairman aspirants is 2,684, according to the EC documents.

Elections to 732 unions will be held on March 22 in the first phase, while 643 unions on March 31 in the second phase. Over 2,800 more unions will go to the polls in four other phases till June.

In the first phase, 60 AL's chairman aspirants were elected uncontested and the BNP has no candidates in 119 unions.

Meanwhile, a man was killed and some 30 others were injured in poll-related clashes in Bogra, Patuakhali and Satkhira in the last two days, reports our correspondents there.

In Bogra, a supporter of AL chairman candidate in Buriganj union under Shibganj upazila was killed and four others were wounded in a clash between AL and BNP men over conducting election campaign on Monday night.

The dead is Mahtab Uddin. In Patuakhali, at least 15 people were injured in a clash between the followers of two councillor candidates in Charmorant union under Rangabali upazila yesterday.

In Satkhira, 11 people were hurt in a clash between the supporters of AL-nominated chairman aspirant and AL's rebel chairman aspirant in Kulia union under Debhata upazila.

In Sherpur, AL's rebel chairman

candidate Noor-e-Alam Talukder alias Bhutto in Urfa union under Nokla upazila alleged that supporters of AL chairman candidate Rezaul Haque alias Hira vandalised his three election camps on Monday night, adds our correspondent there.

3RD PHASE UP POLLS SCHEDULE
Elections to 681 other unions will be held on April 23 in the third phase.

District election officers yesterday announced the polls schedule at their respective districts, said a press release of the EC.

As per the schedule, the last date of submitting nomination papers is March 27. Nomination papers will be scrutinised on March 29 and 30, and the last date for withdrawal of nomination papers is April 6.

RAID 'ON PARIS SUSPECTS'

Manhunt in Brussels after shots fired at cops

BBC ONLINE

Belgian and French police are said to be still hunting two men after shots were fired at police during a counter-terrorism raid in Brussels.

Four officers, all said to be Belgian nationals, were wounded. Streets in the suburb of Forest have been sealed off.

One suspect was shot dead, but two others are said to be still at large.

The raid is linked to the Paris attacks which killed 130 people last November. Islamic State (IS) militants have claimed responsibility for the attacks.

Police said earlier on Tuesday they were pursuing at least two suspects who had escaped over rooftops.

Eric Van Der Sypt, a spokesman for the federal prosecutor, told AFP news agency that "police were fired at" during the raid on Tuesday afternoon. He added that the raid was "linked to the Paris attacks investigation".

A major police operation was launched, with a helicopter flying overhead.

"Two individuals apparently barricaded themselves inside a home," Forest mayor Marc-Jean Ghysels told reporters.

Local media later reported that the police surrounded a flat and one of the suspects was shot dead in an exchange of fire. But two others are still on the run.

Shia homeo doctor killed

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officer-in-charge of Kaliganj Police Station.

Razzak's wife Shahna Parvin said an anonymous caller phoned her husband about a month ago and demanded Tk 2 lakh as extortion money.

"He had no enemy. He practiced homeopathic medicine and followed Shia faith."

She added that some drug peddlers recently rented a house near theirs and had been selling illegal drugs. Razzak protested the illegal business.

Headmaster Feroz Hossain said Razzak, a father of two sons, used to hold regular meetings with his some 20 followers at the dispensary. He even had a meeting with them on Monday night.

Also a hafiz, one who has completely memorised the Qur'an, Razzak had relocated to Kaliganj municipality from his ancestral home at Khorashuni village under Kaliganj upazila about eight years ago, said locals.

An autopsy was carried out on the victim's body at Jhenidah Sadar Hospital yesterday afternoon. Hospital sources said the body bore marks of hack wounds.

He was buried at his family graveyard at Khorashuni village around 5:00pm.

Victim's brother Shawkat Ali filed a murder case with Kaliganj Police Station, accusing unnamed people.

Yesterday, the US embassy in Dhaka offered condolences to Razzak's family members.

"We strongly support Bangladesh's proud tradition of tolerance and communal harmony, which we believe will withstand the efforts of violent extremists who seek to destroy it," the embassy said in a statement posted on its official Facebook page.

On October 24 last year, two men were killed and scores injured in a bomb attack on a gathering in front of the Hussaini Dalan in Old Dhaka.

The following month, armed assailants stormed a Shia mosque in Shibganj upazila of Bogra and opened fire on people praying inside, killing the muezzin of the mosque and injuring three others.

On January 7 this year, homeopathic doctor Jamiruddin Khaza was hacked to death at his dispensary at Bedeghat Bazar in Jhenidah.

The IS reportedly claimed the credit for killing Jamiruddin. The claim could not be independently verified by this newspaper.

Our correspondent in Jhenidah contributed to this report.

Talks on to pick

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On Monday, a steering committee formed for intensive supervision of the airport's security short-listed two British companies -- Redline and Restrata -- and asked their officials to visit Bangladesh as early as possible, said a Caab official.

Two other companies on the list are G4S and Westminster Security Services.

Officials from Restrata may visit Bangladesh today for negotiation, said a ministry official told this correspondent yesterday.

"We are expecting to complete the negotiations by tomorrow (Wednesday) and choose a company," he said, wishing anonymity.

Today it will also be decided that for how long the company will be hired and for how much money, he added.

The job of the hired company will cover security management, quality control in civil aviation, Aviation Security (AVSEC) screeners training, infrastructural development and cargo security.

After signing a contract with the Caab on March 24, the hired company

will deploy its security personnel at the airport the very next day.

The authorities decided to appoint a firm from the list of the British high commissioner because, despite several measures taken during the last few months since October last year, the UK assessments continue to identify a number of weaknesses at the Shahjalal airport, the official said.

ABOUT REDLINE

Headquartered at National Security Training Centre located within Robin Hood Airport at Doncaster in the UK, Redline offers, among other services, aviation security training for senior management team, security managers and ground security supervisors.

It has also courses on threat assessment, recognition of firearms and cargo security.

Its website reads, "At Redline, we work closely with the Department for Transport (DfT), which authorises and certifies security instructors through a number of courses, including aircrew instructors, aviation security instructors, and Recognition of Firearms and Explosives (REF)."