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2 hacked to death in flat

Gang of 5/6 kills USAID official, known to be gay rights activist, and his friend, injures apartment's security guard, policeman

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In an assault that bears the hallmarks of militant attacks, unidentified assailants yesterday hacked to death a local staff member of the USAID and his friend in a flat in the capital's Kalabagan, police said.

A police officer and the building guard were also injured in the machete attack carried out by a group of five to six around 5:15pm.

The USAID staff, Xulhaz Mannan, earlier worked as a protocol officer of former US ambassador Dan Mozena for long. His friend was identified as Mahbub Tonoy, 26, a private university student.

Xulhaz, 35, was a Political Process Analyst at the USAID. He was also an editor of "Roopbaan," the country's only known magazine for the LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) community.

His mother Sakhina Begum was in the house during the attack, but it was not clear



Xulhaz Mannan



Mahbub Tonoy

if she was in the same room. The house help was in the kitchen.

The injured police officer is Assistant Sub-inspector Momtaz, who was hacked when he tried to nab one of the attackers on Dolphiner Goli, some 300 yards from the building. He is taking treatment at a local clinic.

Security guard Parvez Mollah was admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital with

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Bodies of Xulhaz Mannan, a USAID official, and his friend Mahbub Tonoy are being taken to DMC morgue last night. Unidentified assailants hacked them to death in a flat in the capital's Kalabagan area yesterday. PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

US outraged by Xulhaz murder

Amnesty, CPJ condemn

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The United States last night strongly condemned the brutal killing of USAID official Xulhaz Mannan at his Dhaka home.

"We are outraged by the barbaric attack on Mr. Xulhaz Mannan, a beloved member of our embassy family and a courageous advocate for LGBTI rights, human rights," US State Department Spokesperson John Kirby said at the daily press briefing in Washington.

"An act like this is beyond words, unjustifiable, inexcusable. As we mourn his death, we celebrate Xulhaz's life and everything he contributed to Bangladesh, to the United States, and to the global struggle for human rights and dignity," added the spokesperson.

Xulhaz, 35, and his friend Mahbub Tonoy were hacked to death by a gang of five/six who entered Xulhaz's Kalabagan flat posing as couriers yesterday afternoon.

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BNP-Jamaat clique carrying out killings

Says PM

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday accused the BNP-Jamaat clique of carrying out killings like the Kalabagan double-murder.

"Everybody knows who were behind such killings...the BNP-Jamaat nexus has been engaged in such secret and heinous murders to destabilise the country," she told a meeting of the Awami League nomination board for pourasava and union parishad polls at the Gono Bhaban.

Those who are involved in such killings must be traced and brought to justice, the PM added.

PM's Press Secretary Ihsanul Karim briefed reporters after the meeting.

Hasina, also the AL

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Jail guard killed

Bike-riding assailants shoot him dead yards away from high-security Kashimpur jail



Rustam Ali

JAMIL MAHMUD with ABU BAKAR SIDDIQUE, Gazipur

In broad day light, bike-riding criminals gunned down a jail guard yards away from the gate of the country's largest high-security prison in Kashimpur of Gazipur yesterday.

About-to-retire sergeant instructor Rustam Ali was sitting in front of a pharmacy about 150 yards from the prison gate

when two to three assailants on a motorbike shot him from close range around 11:15am, said locals and the prison authority.

He fell to the ground and died on the spot. The criminals fled towards Dhaka-Tangail highway on the motorbike.

Locals who saw his body immediately after the incident said his right hand was on the left side of his chest. Possibly he was trying to apply pressure on the gunshot

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4 murdered in 3 dists

STAR REPORT

Four people were hacked and shot to death and another was severely injured in separate incidents in Chittagong, Kusthia and Brahmanbaria yesterday.

In Chittagong, unidentified men hacked and shot dead two youths in Rangunia upazila in the early hours of yesterday.

The deceased are Abul Kashem, 30, son of Badsha Mia, and Manjur Hossain, 25, son of Moniruzzaman. They lived in Sarafbata area of the upazila.

Police suspect that a previous enmity with a rival group over occupation of a piece of hilly land in the upazila might be the reason behind the killings.

The two also stood accused in a murder case.

According to locals and Kashem's family members, some 10 to 11 people

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JS AUTHORITY TO REMOVE SC JUDGES

Draft law approved to probe misconduct

HASAN JAHI TUSHER

The cabinet yesterday approved in principle a draft law specifying the procedures for investigation into allegations of misconduct or incapacity against a Supreme Court judge and the judge's removal by the Jatiya Sangsad.

On September 17, 2014, the JS unanimously passed the 16th Constitutional Amendment Bill through which it got back the powers to remove SC judges for misconduct or incapacity.

The move to enact the Supreme Court Judges (Investigation) Act-2016 came 19 months after the constitutional amendment.

Constitution experts have been stressing the need for enacting a law for appointment of SC judges first, rather than making a law for their removal.

Talking to reporters after the weekly cabinet meeting yesterday, Cabinet Secretary M Shafiqul Alam said the draft law was placed before the cabinet, as it was a "constitutional obligation" under section

96(3) of the charter following the 16th amendment.

The approval comes around a week before the High Court is set to deliver a verdict on May 5 on a writ petition that challenged the legality of the 16th amendment empowering parliament to impeach an SC judge for incapacity or misconduct.

The chief justice has not given any opinion on the draft law sent to him recently.

The draft law says any aggrieved citizen with evidence would be able to file with the Speaker complaints of misconduct or incapacity against an SC judge.

The Speaker would then form a 10-member JS body to probe the allegations. And it would submit a primary report to the Speaker within a week.

If the report says the allegations against the judge concerned were true, the Speaker would form a high-powered committee with a former chief justice, an ex-attorney general and a noted jurist or an eminent citizen to review the report.

If the committee recommends removal

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MURDER OF RU PROF Family decries bid to portray him as atheist

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Family members of slain Prof Rezaul Karim Siddiquee yesterday urged all to remain alert for any propaganda campaign to portray the teacher as an atheist.

Prof Rezaul was very polite and humble, but it seems he was being labelled as a promoter of atheism only for his innocent love for music, they told a mourning meeting at English department of Rajshahi University.

Husne Ara, wife of the slain teacher, called upon Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to ensure justice for her husband's murder.

"If you are really a powerful prime minister, trace the real killers immediately and ensure exemplary punishment for them. I want to see justice for the murder before I die," she said.

Her daughter Rizwana Hasin and son Riasat

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A baby falls asleep on the shoulder of its mother who was waiting for a bus near the capital's Chandrima Udyan for more than an hour yesterday afternoon. Failing to get any transport, the mother started for her destination on foot in the sweltering summer heat, putting a towel on the baby's head. A heat wave is sweeping the country for more than two weeks with no rain in sight.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Youth workforce to lead future development

Says UNDP human dev report

PORIMOL PALMA

Bangladesh has a huge young and productive workforce that will continue to increase until 2030 and can contribute to dramatic socio-economic development.

After 2030, the share of aged population would go up to create pressure on the fiscal management, according to the UNDP's Asia-Pacific Human Development Report 2016, which will be released today in the capital.

Therefore, Bangladesh needs to get robust policies in place to best utilise the demographic dividend and prepare for the imminent challenges, the United Nations Development Programme said in the report titled "Shaping the future: how changing demographics can power human development".

"When a country has more people to work, save and pay taxes, there is an opportunity to step up growth and development," Tasneem Mirza, one of the authors of the report said.

However, to utilise this opportunity, the country needs to create not only more jobs but also better jobs ensuring higher wages and productivity, she added.

"Therefore, the government has to have proactive policies that can enhance labour market outcomes or lose significant opportunity," the economist at the regional bureau for Asia and the Pacific, UNDP, told this correspondent.

Of the country's 16 crore population, 10.5 crore are

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