

A little groundwork too much to ask?

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"We identified him through photographs released by the police earlier," he said. In a DMP release on May 19, Sharif topped the list of six Ansarullah Bangla Team members for information leading to whose arrest police announced awards.

Police knew about Sharif's other phony names: Sakib, Saleh, Arif, Hadi-1 etc but they did not know about his real name, Mukul Rana, by which parents call him and people in his locality know him. Only hours into the police disclosure, the media came up with reports that Mukul had been missing since being kidnapped by some unidentified persons in Jessore four months back. They didn't "know" or chose not to "know" that a general diary was indeed filed where Mukul's family claimed he was picked up by 10 to 12 persons, who introduced themselves as DB policemen. It was big

news in his locality as Mukul was "kidnapped" only a couple of days after his marriage.

This development has called into question the whole police investigation. From news reports at different times, we tended to believe that cops and intelligence agencies were on top of the killings of freethinkers.

Mukul's case showed how wrong we were.

While announcing bounty on his head in its official website on May 19 and also on Sunday in the press release after his death in "crossfire", the DMP said "Sharif" was from greater Khulna region.

Within a few hours, the media found out that he was Mukul, not Sharif, and that he hailed from Baluigachhi village in Satkhira Sadar upazila.

The new knowledge made it evident that field-level police didn't even go to

his village home, talk with his parents, neighbours and friends, or visit the college Mukul studied in.

If this is the real picture of how the recent targeted killings are being probed, then one might ask: Isn't there a risk that an innocent might any day find that he has bounty on his head? What if there is a case of mistaken identity? Will not such a situation benefit the real culprits?

It's a very dangerous situation and an uncomfortable experience. If we now start to doubt every police investigation and claim, then whom do we turn to for safety? How credible is the claim that Mukul was killed in a shootout?

Should not the police promptly investigate now who actually kidnapped Mukul from Jessore four months back? Should not they go back and check if the identities of the remaining five on the list are right?

It shows law enforcers' weakness

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general discussion on the proposed budget.

His comments came when two militant suspects -- Golam Faizullah Fahim and Sharif -- have been killed in recent "crossfire" sparking widespread criticism by right activists and social media users as the suspects might have had some vital information about the recent secret killings.

With Sharif (Mukul Rana) and Faizullah, at least 20, including seven militant suspects, were killed in "shoot-outs" since police launched a special crackdown against militants after the murder of a superintendent of police's wife in Chittagong.

Menon, a top leader of ruling Awami League-led 14-party alliance, said the militant groups have been carrying out the killings in the country for several months.

They are killing priests, bloggers,

monks, teachers and other minority members, he added.

The attacks of militants were not only against a specific community but also against the people of Bangladesh, he said, adding that the militants were trying to create a communal state through these attacks.

Menon claimed that there was no IS in the country, but there might be some of its followers.

Strongly criticising the Election Commission, he alleged that the EC destroyed the election system by holding the recent union parishad elections that were marred by deadly clashes and irregularities.

"Democracy will be in real danger if we cannot re-establish the election system," Menon said, stressing the need for reforming the EC to make this happen.

The leftist leader also proposed that the EC should hold dialogue with all

political parties to make the polls free from black money and muscle power.

On the construction of the third terminal at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, the minister said the government was discussing with Japan International Cooperation Agency (Jica) to get funds to build the terminal, which is expected to be completed by 2019.

"Once the third terminal is built, about 24 million passengers will be able to use it a year," the minister said.

About the proposed allocation for the tourism sector, he said Tk 540 crore has been proposed for the sector in fiscal 2016-17, which is not enough to develop the sector.

Tourism will be the second largest foreign exchange earning sector after the RMG in the days to come, said Menon, adding that river communications will be established with the neighbouring countries next year to encourage tourism.

Record \$2.2b FDI came last year

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Adani Enterprises Ltd's investment plan involving \$1,500 million and Reliance Power's \$1,500 million -- both in the energy sector -- were among the 10 largest fresh projects announced in 2015.

Despite the increased flow, FDI receipt to Bangladesh remains below 1 percent of the gross domestic product.

On Saturday, Khandker Golam Moazzem, additional research director of the Centre for Policy Dialogue, said that in case of foreign investment, the share of reinvestment was going up which might ignite hope in many that the foreign investors are investing their profits in Bangladesh rather than sending them out.

"It is a good sign. But at the same time, the share of potential new investors is decreasing."

In April this year, Zahid Hussain, lead economist of the World Bank's Dhaka office, said new investment in the form of equity was not coming.

"This is because there has not been any significant change in Bangladesh's investment scenario. The fundamental barriers that have been holding back new investment have not seen new visible improvements apart from the power sector."

The problems with roads and highways, ports and land have

remained the same, he said.

FDI outflows from Bangladesh rose slightly to \$46 million last year from \$44 million year ago.

This year, the UNCTAD's report looks into global financial flows against the background of stalling global growth, falling commodity prices and geopolitical tensions.

The report, titled "Investor Nationality: Policy Challenges", said globally, the recovery in FDI was strong in 2015, with foreign direct investment flows jumping.

A surge in cross-border mergers and acquisitions (M&As) was the principal factor behind the global rebound. However, part of the growth in FDI was due to very large corporate reconfigurations by multinational enterprises, including shifting their headquarters, for strategic reasons, it said.

Regulations on the ownership and control of companies are essential in the investment regime of most countries. The report provides insights into the ownership structures of multinational enterprises, analyses national and international investment policy practices worldwide, and proposes a new framework for handling ownership issues.

Global FDI flows jumped by 38 percent to \$1.76 trillion in 2015, the

highest level since the global economic and financial crisis began in 2008.

"However, this growth did not translate into an equivalent expansion in productive capacity in all countries," said Ban Ki-moon, secretary-general of the UN, in the foreword of the report.

"This is a troubling development in light of the investment needs associated with the newly adopted Sustainable Development Goals and the ambitious action envisaged in the landmark Paris Agreement on climate change."

The United States topped the list of the countries receiving the highest amount of FDI, followed by Hong Kong, China, Ireland, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Singapore, Brazil, Canada and India.

In South Asia, thanks to rising FDI in India, total inflows to South Asia increased by about 22 percent to \$50 billion, surpassing FDI into West Asia.

The report said global FDI flows are expected to decline by 10-15 percent in 2016. Over the medium term, flows are projected to resume growth in 2017 and to surpass \$1.8 trillion in 2018.

Hindered by the current global and regional economic slowdown, FDI inflows to Asia are expected to decline in 2016 by about 15 percent, reverting to their 2014 level, it added.

Hitler's last

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standing for banned greeting 'Heil Hitler' with 'h' the eighth letter in the alphabet.

In total the buyer, who said he came from Argentina and bought the items for a museum, purchased over 50 items, reports newspaper Bild.

He also went home with the brass container Goering used to house the cyanide capsule he killed himself with two hours before his scheduled execution after his Nuremberg trial.

Last week Germany's top Jewish group branded the auction "scandalous and disgusting" and called for the event to be banned.

The Central Council of Jews in Germany said it was "disgusting" to make "business, without any limits, with items of Hitler, Goering and Eva Braun", said Council President Josef Schuster.

In an investigation by Bild, who went undercover into the auction which was banned to the press, they reported the room was filled with people of all ages, including muscular guys with shaved heads and tribal tattoos.

The items were sold under the theme 'Hitler and the Nazi grandees - a look into the abyss of evil', after their late owner passed away.

They belonged to former US army medic John K Lattimer, who was charged with monitoring the health of Nazi war criminals in Nuremberg.

In total 169 lots were sold, and the small Argentine man in a baseball cap 'bought practically everything', reported Bild.

Now confusion over arrest

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Two suspected members of Ansarullah Bangla Team were arrested during the raid in Badda, he added.

Mujibor, who is from Jagannathpur in Jessore, is a quack by profession and a pious man, according to locals.

His father Mobarak Ali Biswas used to earn livelihood driving engine boat in the Bhairab River.

Neighbours say neither Mobarak nor his two sons had any involvement in politics, but their relatives have links with Jamaat-e-Islami.

Mujibor's younger brother Amir Hossain, a farmer, had filed the general diary on February 25 regarding Mukul's abduction.

Mukul had been missing since 10 to 12 persons on a microbus kidnapped him from Bashundia intersection in Jessore around 11:00am on February 23, his father Abul Kalam Azad told this newspaper on Monday.

He was returning home from in-laws' house at Jagannathpur with newlywed wife Mohua Akter. It was just four days into their marriage.

Quoting his daughter-in-law, Azad said while taking Mukul away, the kidnappers identified themselves as DB men.

After he was killed in a "shootout" on Sunday, police identified him as Sakib alias Sharif alias Saleh alias Arif alias Hadi-1, one of the six Ansarullah Bangla Team men who had bounty on their heads.

But the media came to know that he was Md Mukul Rana of Baluigachhi village in Satkhira Sadar upazila.

Azad yesterday said he would not have objected if his son was executed

after being found guilty in trial.

"I could have consoled myself if my son was found guilty of having militant links and killing people," he told The Daily Star over the phone.

Azad said he is involved with the ruling Awami League. And he would have handed over Mukul to police if he could learn that his son had militant link.

He claimed his son was the most brilliant boy in his village and it is beyond his understanding what had happened.

Asked whether he would seek justice for the killing of his son, Azad fighting tears said, "Is there any use seeking justice? Will I ever get back my son?"

Mukul was buried inside the compound of his house in Baluigachhi village in Satkhira Sadar upazila around 11:00am, an hour after his body was taken home in an ambulance from Dhaka, reports our Satkhira correspondent.

On Sunday, police said they conducted a raid at Meradia in the capital getting information about the presence of "Sharif".

During the raid, they saw three people on a motorcycle speeding away. They signalled the bike to pull over but the trio ignored and opened fire on the cops.

The cops fired back injuring one of the three.

Taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital, the injured was declared dead. He was then identified as "Sharif", police say.

Later in the day at a press briefing, police said "Sharif" was among the men who directly took part in the killing of writer-blogger Avijit Roy on February 26 last year.

10 hours

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Road communication with around 35 districts through the terminal remained halted for around 10 hours since 6:00am due to the strike.

Two transport workers' associations have been fighting over collection of "illegal toll" from buses for the last couple of years. The two sides clashed on Monday, and one of them enforced the bus strike yesterday morning.

After around 10 hours of stalemate, the group withdrew the strike on assurance that ministers concerned and leaders of the transport sector would resolve the feud within three days.

Every day, around 2,000 inter-district buses from the terminal carry about one lakh people to different destinations.

Visiting the bus stop and its adjacent areas yesterday morning, these correspondents found that many of the commuters were sitting idly with their baggage.

They expressed frustration over the culture of calling strike which causes immense sufferings to common people.

"They [transport owners and workers] always use us [commuters] as pawns in having their ends met. We want this culture to end," said Sheuli Akhter, a university student, who was waiting to board a bus to Feni.

The scorching heat added to the sufferings of the commuters, who came to the bus terminal from a long distance.

"I have come here from Mohammadpur. My bus was scheduled to start for Chittagong at 11:30am. But now they [operators] are saying that the bus will not leave," said 60-year-old Halim Sheikh, who was fasting.

The strike also disrupted road transport in the city. Because of the transport crisis, many people were seen walking towards their destinations from Sayedabad and Jatrabari.

"I waited for about an hour at Jatrabari intersection to take a bus to Karwan Bazar. But I found none, and now I am walking towards Motijheel, hoping to get a bus there," said Nazma Rahman, who was going to her relative's house with her five-year-old daughter.

Taking advantage of the situation, drivers of CNG-run auto-rickshaws and rickshaw pullers charged fares higher than usual.

"I bargained with several auto-rickshaw drivers. None of them agreed to take me to Mohakhali from Jatrabari for less than Tk 400 whereas the normal fare is Tk 250," said Md Sumon, who works at a private firm.

Fugitive MP

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sitting," he added.

AL lawmaker from Tangail-6 Sanowar Hossain told this correspondent that he saw Amanur's signature on the attendance book kept at the parliament lobby.

Amanur and his three brothers are among those who stand accused in a case filed for killing Tangail AL leader and freedom fighter Faruk Ahmed and have remained fugitive.

Police, on May 20, confiscated moveable assets of 10 fugitive accused, including Amanur, after a Tangail court ordered the confiscation. He is also facing an arrest order.

On May 16, Senior Judicial Magistrate in Tangail Golam Kibria ordered confiscation of assets of the fugitives as the accused did not appear before the court.

Faruk was shot dead on January 18, 2013. Police submitted the charge sheet against 14, including Amanur, on February 3 this year.

Sources at the Parliament Secretariat said Amanur last attended a sitting in June last year. His membership might have been cancelled if he had missed the ongoing budget session, the sources said.

According to the Jatiya Sangsad's rules of procedure, a lawmaker will lose membership if he remains absent from attending parliament sessions for 90 sittings at a stretch without permission of the Speaker.

SC stayed

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June 20.

After the SC passed the order yesterday, Attorney General Mahbubey Alam told reporters at his office that the detained accused persons, who were acquitted by the HC in Ahsanullah Master killing case, cannot be released from jail following the SC order.

The HC on June 15 confirmed the death penalty of six persons, including a central Jubo Dal leader, for killing Ahsanullah Master, a decade after a trial court sentenced 22 people to death and six others to life term for the murder committed in 2004.

The HC commuted capital punishment of seven others to life imprisonment, upheld life terms of two and acquitted 11 of the charges against them. It disposed of the appeals of two others as they died during the trial of the much-talked-about political killing.

Gunmen killed Ahsanullah, a freedom fighter, and Omar Faruq Ratan, a student, in a staccato burst of fire on a rally of Swedchhasebak League, a pro-AL body, at Noagaon near the MP's house in Tongi on May 7, 2004.

Boutiques buzzing

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momentum when fashion lovers prepare to celebrate eid in a festive mood.

Apart from wholesalers, women and dress designers, many of whom do online business in boutique dresses, place orders for their own choice of embroidery, block and batik prints for salwar-kamiz, sarees, panjabis and bedroom stuffs such as bedcovers, pillow covers and curtains.

There are more than 60 shops at the market that do business in batik/tie-dye, block print, machine embroidery, hand paint, brush paint and sequins and beads.

Block prints on a saree usually cost Tk 150 to Tk 200, whereas on salwar-kamiz it costs Tk 120 to Tk 180. It will cost up to Tk 400 to hand-paint a saree and Tk 250 for salwar-kamiz, while spray paint will cost similarly, according to the owners and workers of the market.

However, doing embroidery on the dresses is comparatively costlier. It costs Tk 500 to Tk 3,000 to do embroidery on a saree depending on the designs and threads to be used.

Several hundred workers are engaged in a hard labour to do these jobs. In normal times, the workers have their shift stretching from 10:00am to 8:00pm. But they now work until 3:00am in the early hours hoping to earn some extra money for their families.

"I have to work until sehri time to get my work done due to additional orders from the buyers. This situation will continue until a day before eid,"

said Mohammad Idris, who was seen busy with doing block prints at a shop.

Like Idris, most of the workers work until late at night due to pressure of huge orders and also to earn some extra money ahead of eid.

"I normally earn Tk 10,000 a month. Now I hope to earn up to Tk 16,000 during Ramadan," Mohammad Milon, who does embroidery sewing at another shop, told The Daily Star on Wednesday.

"If I can earn this extra sum, my family will be able to celebrate eid in a better way," he said, adding that they get Tk 30 for doing every piece of salwar-kamiz.

Milon can complete the work on around 22 pieces of salwar-kamiz every day.

Mosharraf Hossain, owner of a block print shop, said though boutique dress business got the momentum in the city in recent years, their income has rather decreased.

He said prices of chemicals, rent of shops and salaries of staff have gone high in recent years, but the prices of boutique and block prints did not increase that much.

Many of his fellows have quit this business in the last several years for this reason, he added.

1,997 cases

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The minister also said the government has planned to introduce a newborn infection management system to ensure services for newborns at Union Parishad-level healthcare centres.

'Brits don't quit'

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and the "In" campaign were very worried about the outcome.

"Cameron is panicked, it's out of his hands now," Arron Banks, a multi-millionaire insurance tycoon who is funding one of the Leave campaigns, said on Twitter.

As each side sought to play its last trump cards, the pro-EU "Britain Stronger in Europe" campaign issued a final poster of a door leading into a dark void with the slogan: "Leave and there's no going back."

Former England soccer captain David Beckham, a hugely popular public figure, added his voice to Remain's list of celebrity supporters. "For our children and their children we should be facing the problems of the world together and not alone," he said.

Leave campaigners stepped up their relentless focus on what they call uncontrolled immigration, saying Cameron had been warned four years ago his goal of reducing net arrivals was impossible due to EU rules.

The anti-EU UK Independence Party issued a poster showing a traffic jam with the message "The school over-run" and saying nearly one in four of Britain's primary schools were full or oversubscribed.

The EU - already shaken by differences over migration and the future of the euro zone - would lose its second-largest economy, one of its top two military powers and by far its richest financial centre.

George Soros, the billionaire who bet against the pound in 1992, wrote in an article for the Guardian newspaper that a vote to leave would trigger a bigger, more disruptive devaluation than the fall on Black Wednesday, when market pressure forced sterling out of the European Exchange Rate

Mechanism.

There could also be severe political ramifications, with many in the Brexit camp regarding Cameron's leadership as untenable if there is a vote to leave.

Justice Secretary Michael Gove, the most senior cabinet minister campaigning for Leave, said he would "reflect" on his own position depending on the outcome.

Campaigning was suspended for three days after the murder of pro-EU lawmaker Jo Cox, who was shot and stabbed to death in her constituency in northern England last Thursday.

Some Leave campaigners accuse the Remain camp of exploiting her death as part of what they portray as a campaign of scaremongering by the establishment at home and abroad.

Turnout is likely to be key to the result, and the ORB poll found that Remain supporters, who had been regarded as being more apathetic, were increasingly motivated to vote.

After Cox's murder, polls indicated sentiment had swung back to the "In" campaign after a major shift towards Leave. But the latest polls indicate the trend was short lived.

The "Out" campaign says it is the anti-establishment choice, and its message that EU membership has handed political control to Brussels and fuelled mass immigration appears to have struck a chord with many Britons.

The Remain camp has focused mostly on the economic benefits of EU membership and the risks posed by leaving.

Pro-EU leaders, including former prime ministers Tony Blair and John Major, have warned that an exit could also trigger the break-up of the United Kingdom by prompting another Scottish independence vote if England pulled Scotland out of the EU.

No terminal exams

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introduced in the country in 2009 replacing the scholarship exams. The test for the students of ebtadai (primary level of madrasa) began the following year.

The test, which was the first gateway to the secondary level for several lakh youngsters, became a matter of prestige for many parents, as scholarships were given to the students on the basis of results of terminal exams.

For months, parents got their children prepared, engaged tutors and sent them to the coaching centres so that the kids get good grades in the exam.

Asked about the scholarships, the primary education minister said, "We will certainly have an evaluation after class-V. We are working on it."

The government on May 18 elevated the level of primary education to class-VIII from class-V, and made a decision in principle to scrap the terminal examination due to the elevation. But it did not say when the test would be scrapped, leaving thousands of students and their parents anxious for a month.

A section of guardians then started demonstration demanding the scrapping of the exam from this year. They held protest rallies at different schools for the last couple of weeks. They pointed out that the terminal test after class-V has already become obsolete with the elevation of primary level to class-VIII.

"If the primary terminal exam is held this year, the students would have to take similar tests again in class-VIII. Why would a student take a similar test

twice?" asked Habibur Rahman, a father whose daughter studies at Motijheel Ideal School and College.

On Monday, parents, under the banner of Obhibhabok Oikya Forum, organised a press conference where they announced that they would form human chains at different schools in Dhaka on July 20 if their demands were not met by July 10.

Yesterday, the guardians hailed the government's decision.

"We believe that there will be an end to the coaching business that thrived centring the terminal exams," said Ziaul Kabir Dulu, president of the forum.

There has been a strong criticism against the primary test from educationists and parents who said the examination put "extra pressure" on the kids.

Thanks to the exam, most of the guardians get engaged in an unhealthy competition so that their children can secure the highest grades and therefore making their children dependent on the coaching centres and guidebooks, they viewed.

According to a Campaign for Popular Education (Campe) report, private expenditure on class-V students increased after the introduction of the test, as the students became heavily dependent on coaching, private tuition and guidebooks.

On an average, a family spends Tk 8,212 for an examinee of the primary terminal test, said the report titled "Education Watch Report 2014: An assessment of Primary Education Completion Examination in Bangladesh", launched last year.