

Confession

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Tipped off, detectives arrested Mahmudul, son of late Maulana Fayez Uddin of Aangergara, in Tongi's Gazipur on Saturday and Saiful in Dinajpur's Birganj upazila the next day, added police.

A Mymensingh court sent the duo to jail yesterday, said law enforcers at a press conference in the SP's office in Mymensingh city.

Employed in Saudi Arabia, Abul, son of late Abdus Samad, returned in August on hearing about the affair from locals and started questioning his wife Asma Akhter, 45, and seeking money he had sent her, claimed police.

Asma drugged Abul and, along with the other three, hacked him into pieces on the night of November 11 before dumping those in the hole, added police.

She filed a general diary with Bhaluka Police Station alleging that Abul had gone missing, said Officer-in-Charge Mamun-or-Rashid.

Requested by police, locals initiated a search and on November 18 found the torso, which was identified by Abul's relatives. Abul's brother Abdul Mannan filed a case that day accusing unnamed persons.

Asma and her daughter Mukta, 21, have not pled guilty. They are in jail, having been arrested and taken on remand four times before the case was shifted to the detective branch of Mymensingh police.

JS passes

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parliamentary standing committee concerned for scrutiny.

Quader said a law is necessary for bringing discipline in road transport sector, reducing road accidents and raising mass awareness about road safety as well as providing improved services to people.

Under the bill, the authority will provide licenses to drivers and driving instructors, motor vehicles registrations, route permits and fitness certificates, as well as oversee passengers and goods transport services and all activities regarding road safety.

The authority will also fix traffic signals, speed levels, excel load, tax of motor vehicles, and formulate and implement coordinated route networks outside Dhaka Transport Coordination Authority (DTCA).

A 16-member advisory council headed by the road transport and bridges minister would be formed to fulfil the objectives of the bill.

Complaint

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allegation was false, and started yelling at Ezaz. Soon the heated exchange turned chaotic as the stall owner was joined by his four sons -- Nawasad, Ershad, Shamser and Shamshu.

At one stage, they took the kettle filled with brewing tea from the oven and threw the liquid at Ezaz. That left him with burn injuries to the hands, chest and other parts of the body.

Locals, hearing his screams, rescued him and took him to a Saidpur hospital.

After giving him first aid treatment, doctors there referred Ezaz to Rangpur Medical College Hospital, since his condition was serious. He is now undergoing treatment in Rangpur.

The victim's elder brother, Meraz Ahmed was preparing to file a case with Saidpur police against Sainul and his four sons during the filing of the report.

Amirul Islam, officer-in-charge of the police station, said police would take action on receiving a complaint.

Victim's

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Ibrahim, executive magistrate and upazila nirbahi officer (UNO) of Dhunat upazila, who conducted the court, told The Daily Star.

The girl's father Mofiz Uddin, a resident of Purba Goshaiabari, said he had to borrow the money from a village lender on the condition of paying Tk 500 in monthly interest till it is paid back.

"It will take many months for me to pay off the sum," he added.

The stalker, Enamul Haque, 20, also a resident of the area, had been closely following the sixth grader on her way to and from school for almost a month, said neighbours.

He also beat her up on Sunday evening when she was returning home from school, her classmates told The Daily Star.

"She could have been seriously injured had locals not come to her rescue," said a student who was present there.

Enamul was sent to Bogra Jail by the court in the afternoon, said Mizanur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Dhunat Police Station.

Wheat blast

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The weeklong field surveillance comes in a follow-up of an international training programme titled, "Taking Action to Mitigate the Threat of Wheat Blast in South Asia: Disease Surveillance and Monitoring Skills Training" that concluded at the WRC in Dinajpur yesterday.

The WRC is a centre conducting research and development of wheat under the Bangladesh Agriculture Research Institute (BARI), Dinajpur.

The 13-day (February 4-16) intensive training and field surveillance is organised by the WRC, BARI in collaboration with the Mexico-based International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT), the CGIAR research programme on wheat, the Delivering Genetic Gain in Wheat (DGGW) project of Cornell University's Wheat Initiative, and Kansas State University (KSU).

Forty wheat pathologists, breeders and agronomists from Bangladesh, India and Nepal are taking part in this programme, with experts from CIMMYT, Mexico, India, Cornell University, KSU, BARI and Bangladesh Agricultural University (BAU) facilitating the training classes.

Fazle Wahid Khondaker, additional

secretary (research) at the agriculture ministry, Abul Kalam Azad, director general of BARI, and Naresh C Deb Barma, director of WRC, among others, attended the inaugural and other working sessions of the training programme.

They called upon the scientists and experts to work together to solve the wheat problem giving it a top priority and sustain wheat production in this region.

The USAID and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation funded the programme through the Cereal Systems Initiative for South Asia (CSISA) and CSISA-Mechanisation projects and the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research.

Responding to this problem, the agriculture ministry formed a task force through the Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council (BARC) last year to suggest recommendations to mitigate wheat blast.

A fact sheet with recommendations was distributed among farmers to raise awareness on how to manage wheat blast. Moreover, awareness building workshops have been organised in seven agricultural regions across the country which were attended by district and upazila-level DAE and BADC

First female commissioner

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"Yes, it's true that I'm the first female election commissioner of the country. For this, I want to express my gratitude to the almighty Allah. I'm also thankful to the president for appointing me," Kabita told The Daily Star last night.

"I have 31 long years' experience in the judiciary. With my experience, I will try to discharge my duties and fulfil people's expectations," she added.

Born in Naogaon in 1957, Kabita completed Bachelor of Science (BSc) and Master of Science (MSc) in zoology from Rajshahi University. She also obtained an LLB degree from the same

university.

As a BCS judicial cadre official, she joined the Munsef Court in Rajshahi in February 1984. She was elevated to joint district judge in 1994 and additional district judge in 2000.

She was promoted as the district judge in October 2006 and severed as district and sessions judge in Chapainawabganj and Rajshahi. She retired as Rajshahi District and Sessions Judge in June last year.

Her late husband was the chief metropolitan magistrate in Rajshahi. Kabita's son is an officer of the Bangladesh Army and her daughter is a

Eminent citizens

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history and the spirit of the Liberation War time and again and the attempt is reflected through the communalisation of school textbooks."

"Hefajat is terming the sculpture a goddess, which is a sheer lie. The sculpture has no connection with religion," said the committee in the statement.

The Nirmul Committee has called upon the Supreme Court and law enforcement agencies to take legal

actions against the persons involved in issuing the threats.

Hefajat-e Islam, Awami Olama League and the editor of an online news portal have recently demanded immediate removal of the sculpture which they claimed to be a Greek idol that had been installed in front of the country's apex court.

Several other Islamist organisations including Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam, member of the BNP-led 20-party alliance, have been making the same

Farewell, Suranjit

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body was taken from Sylhet Osmani International Airport to Sylhet Central Shaheed Minar. People from different walks of life poured in on the premises to pay tribute to the veteran leader.

"He was a learned man, he loved everyone," said Arab Ali, an elderly day labourer from a remote village of Sunamganj, who came to say adieu to the AL leader.

After paying tribute, the body was taken to the airport again. The helicopter carrying the body made stopovers in Sunamganj town and Shalla upazila of the district so people could pay homage to their beloved leader one last time.

Suranjit's body reached his home village around 4:00pm. After the primary religious rituals, the body was taken to Balir Math, a field near his house, where thousands of people thronged to say goodbye to their lawmaker who was also chairman of

the parliamentary standing committee on law, justice and parliamentary affairs.

Later at around 6:20pm, his body was carried to the crematorium and as per his last wish, his body was burnt with logs of the sandalwood he had planted himself years ago.

During the funeral, a number of ministers, lawmakers and leaders of the Awami League were present.

The veteran AL leader and lawmaker died at the age of 72 at Labaid Hospital in the capital early Sunday morning after a prolonged illness.

Born on May 5, 1945 at Anwarpur in Dirai, Suranjit was one of the youngest members of the East Pakistan Provincial Assembly in 1970 from National Awami Party (NAP).

He was elected as an MP in almost all parliaments in the four decades since Bangladesh's independence -- in 1979, 1986, 1991, 1996, 2001, 2009

Saudi observes

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male guardianship system.

Female members of the Saudi royal family also attended the event, with Princess Al-Jawhara bint Fahd Al-Saud hosting a discussion on women's roles in education.

"We want to celebrate the Saudi woman and her successful role, and remind people of her achievements in education, culture, medicine, literature and other areas," Mohammed Al-Saif, a spokesman for the centre, told Arab News.

The kingdom has been heavily criticised for its record on women's rights, where women are severely restricted.

The World Economic Forum's 2015 Global Gender Gap report ranked Saudi Arabia 134 out of 145 countries for gender equality.

Saudi Arabia is the only country in the world where women are prohibited from driving and are unable to obtain a driving licence.

It also has a law stating that all women must have a male guardian, typically a husband, father or brother, who gives them permission to study, travel abroad or marry.

A Human Rights Watch report on male guardianship found "a woman's life is controlled by a man from birth

until death" in Saudi Arabia, as their ability to pursue a career or make life decisions is restricted.

Despite limited reforms in 2009 and 2013 to reduce male control over women, which included no longer requiring permission for women to work and making domestic abuse illegal, the report found the system remains largely in place.

Trump to meet Nato leaders in May: WHouse

AFP, Palm Beach

Donald Trump will meet fellow Nato leaders in May, the White House said Sunday after the president's call with the alliance's Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg.

Trump expressed "strong support for Nato" but called on European members to pitch in more, the White House said in a statement, adding that Trump "agreed to join in a meeting of Nato leaders in Europe in late May."

"The parties agreed to continue close coordination and cooperation to address the full range of security challenges facing Nato," the White House statement said.

Guard kills

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immediately after the attack amid fears of a possible extremist assault.

"There was nothing of the sort and it seems the guard had some sort of personal grudge with the diplomat," Khan said.

The guard has been arrested, he said, and an investigation launched.

Afghan ambassador to Pakistan Omar Zakhilwal described the shooting on his official Facebook account.

"Firing inside Afg Consulate General in Karachi at around 12:30 pm today ... has been carried out by an Afghan guard inside the compound resulting in fatality of one of our diplomats," he wrote.

The consulate is located in Karachi's upscale Clifton neighbourhood. The missions of Indonesia, the United Kingdom and France are nearby.

Karachi, Pakistan's largest city and a major business and industrial hub, is rife with political, sectarian and ethnic violence.

A strategic operation in the city by security forces in recent years has brought a lull in violence, but scattered attacks still take place.

More than

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been injured, said Shahab Ahmed, the District Coordination Officer of Chitral.

The dead in Garam Chashma include four women, four children, and one man, Ahmed said. The devastating wave of pounding snow and ice left 19 houses in the area damaged, he added.

Ahmed said that at least one soldier was killed in Chitral after snow hit a guard post in a separate avalanche, and six soldiers were injured after the incident.

Chitral is in Pakistan's disaster-prone Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, where flash floods killed at least 47 people and left 37 others injured in April.

Sheena Ayub Khan, spokesperson for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province's disaster management authority, told CNN that evacuation efforts are underway.

Another snow storm is expected to lash the border area again on Friday.

Deadly avalanches are common in Afghanistan's mountainous areas in winter, and rescue efforts are frequently hampered by lack of equipment.

Some areas in Badakhshan usually "are only accessible three months a year", Afghan Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah told AFP when asked about access to the region.

With summits peaking at 8,000 metres, other districts can take up to 20 days to get to by road, he said.

Despite billions of dollars in international aid after the ousting of the Taliban government in 2001, Afghanistan remains among the world's poorest nations.

Last month heavy snowfall and freezing weather killed 27 children, all under the age of five, in Jawzjan province in the north.

Bangladeshi

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The shooting occurred around 6:30am when Nurul along with two other fishermen was fishing in the Naf river.

Nurul Mustafa, 32, was hit by a bullet while Md Hashim escaped unhurt after jumping into the river.

"We were fishing at Moulvipara point of the Naf river when a team of Myanmar's Border Guard Police [BGP] came on a speedboat and opened fire," said Hashim.

He, with the help of some locals, took the two injured to Teknaf Upazila Health Complex.

Sohab Das, emergency medical officer at the health complex, said Nurul died of excessive bleeding before being taken to the hospital. Mustafa was later shifted to Cox's Bazar Sadar Hospital as his condition deteriorated.

Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) lodged a protest with the BGP over the shooting incident, said Captain Abuzar Al Jahid of Teknaf BGB Battalion-2.

"The BGP claimed that its members opened fire as the fishermen were crossing the border line defying the patrol team's signal," he told journalists quoting BGP officials.

Legal actions can be taken for trespassing, but firing shots at people like this is against the law, Jahid added.

The BGB was preparing a protest letter to the BGP for violating international laws, he said.

In December last year, Myanmar Navy opened fire on six Bangladeshi fishermen near the St Martin's Island. The foreign ministry had summoned the Myanmar envoy in Dhaka and handed him a protest note over the incident.

Ruling party men

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The AL men left the place after talking to him. Later, the protesters met the vice chancellor at his office.

Again around 11:00am, a procession led by Motihar unit AL General Secretary M Alauddin entered the campus and paraded around it. Later, the AL men staged a sit-in in front of one of the main gates.

"We want jobs," Alauddin told the newspaper in the afternoon.

He also alleged that the university authorities were providing jobs only to the relatives of the employees and the BNP-Jamaat men.

The university authorities rejected the allegation on several occasions before.

On December 21 last year, local AL leaders foiled a viva voce for recruiting class-IV employees at Rajshahi University School on the campus.

Two days later, they again stopped three recruitment tests, forcing job seekers out of the examination halls. The ruling party men also beat some of the job seekers and tore up their documents and dresses, said witnesses.

Besides, Rajshahi city AL General Secretary Dablu Sarkar allegedly threatened RU Vice Chancellor Prof Mizan Uddin at the latter's office on April 20, 2015 while demanding job for ruling party men.

On November 28, 2011, RU BCL men also foiled the Accounting and Information Management department

final examination as one of them had not been allowed to attend it because of poor attendance.

Even after all these incidents, neither the university authorities nor the police have filed any case against the ruling party men.

Contacted, Proctor Azad said, "What action can we take? Local people were demanding jobs and we told them to talk to the university authorities."

However, insiders said the university authorities were not taking any legal action as they know that the protesters have the "blessings of top ruling AL leaders in Rajshahi city".

RU VC Prof Mizan said, "Whenever an incident happens, we inform the police about it. It's them who are supposed to act to maintain law and order on the campus".

Asked, he said, "Filing any case was a matter of discussion".

Police said they could act after getting complaints from the university. Amir Jafar, deputy commissioner of Rajshahi Metropolitan Police, said, "We don't want to apply force when things can be settled through discussions".

RU Pro VC Prof Sarwar Jahan Sajal said the university authorities wanted to maintain a congenial academic atmosphere on the campus.

"Some locals are demanding jobs but we can't give them that as we have to follow certain rules," he said.

Never a stranger

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way to Dhaka for better treatment, said police and family members.

The wife of slain journalist Shimul filed a case against Miru, his two brothers and 15 others on Friday night.

JSD TOAL

Miru started his political career as a member of Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) in the 70s. Apart from being involved with Gonobahini, armed wing of the party, he was the president of its Shahzadpur unit and secretary of its Sirajganj district unit.

He joined the AL in 1996, party sources said.

Many grassroots leaders claimed Miru introduced the use of arms in politics in Shahzadpur in the 90s.

"He is not at all committed to the party. Local leaders and activists cannot go to him because of his arrogance and use of arms in politics," Aslam Ali, an activist of Shahzadpur Jubo League, told The Daily Star.

Miru often hired armed goons from Pabna through his brother Habibur Haque Mintu, secretary of Pabna JSD, added Aslam.

"The mayor controls all the development projects of the municipality through his brothers and a few of his fellow contractors. Nobody dares protest because of his brothers and hired armed men," said Abdur Rahim, ex-president of Shahzadpur municipality AL.

Prof Azad Rahman, secretary of Shahzadpur AL, said Miru was expelled from the party in 1999 and again in 2004 for violating the party's rules of decorum.

"As he returned to the party by lobbying its high-ups, he never bothers to obey the local leadership," he told this correspondent.

"Even in the last municipality election [in 2015], the local party unit did not propose Miru's name. But he managed the nomination from the central committee," said Azad, also the chairman of Shahzadpur Upazila Parishad.

Nazrul Islam, BNP's mayoral candidate in 2015, alleged that Miru also manipulated the municipality elections. Driving out Nazrul's agents, Miru took all the polling centres under his control just one hour after the voting started.

Soon after the 2008 parliament polls, Miru got acquainted with a minister. At that time, he started to stay in Dhaka

most of the time, said several party leaders.

"During his stay in Dhaka, he managed to stay close to some central leaders," one of them said, wishing anonymity.

Recently, Miru became the organising secretary of the district AL. But party men demanded his removal from the post and cancellation of his primary membership of the party due to his "criminal activities and corruption".

The mayor was accused of several criminal offences but got acquitted from all the charges, according to his affidavit submitted to the Election Commission during the municipality election.

He was accused in three criminal cases in Sirajganj from 2006 to 2010.

GUN LICENCE

After Thursday's clash, police recovered a shotgun from his house.

"The gun which we recovered is licensed. The mayor managed its licence under the freedom fighter's quota in 2014," said Rezaul Haque, officer-in-charge of Sirajganj Police Station.

Asked how he got the licence, the OC said it is the district administration which deals with the matter.

The Daily Star contacted Nusrat Azmeri Haque, executive magistrate of Sirajganj, to know the process of getting the licence.

"Without seeing official documents, I can't go into details," said the official, who heads the section that issues gun licences.

FALSE INFO

Miru managed his freedom fighter's certificate by providing false information about his age, according to Shahzadpur Muktiyoddha Sangsad leaders.

Because of the controversy, his freedom fighter's allowance was suspended last year, they said.

"Miru showed his date of birth as January 1, 1955 whereas the real date is January 1, 1959 as per his SSC certificate and voter ID card," Binoy Kumar, commander of the Muktiyoddha Sangsad, told this newspaper.

"Miru managed a fake birth registration certificate from the municipality and submitted it to get a freedom fighter's certificate," he added.

"When we came to know this controversy, we stopped his allowance last year."

Binoy also said, "We never heard his name as a freedom fighter. We don't

Canal freed

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canals that fall under the jurisdiction of the DSCC.

"The owners of the illegal structures were well aware of the drive. And some of them even removed the structures themselves," Shofikul Islam, Awami League president of Dokkhingaon unit, told The Daily Star.

He said the locals were happy with the move as they always wanted to see the canal free of illegal occupation.

Talking to The Daily Star, some of the shop owners of the Nandipara Jelaparihad Market said they had temporarily leased their shops from the Dhaka district commissioners' office.

Abdul Jabbar, who used to own five shops at the market, said he had taken out his shops on lease for Tk 35,000. "The expiry of the lease ended last year. I applied for its renewal but the application was still pending."

Many such owners thought their shops would not come under the purview of the drive but when they realised their mistake, it was already quite late.

After the drive began around 12:50pm, many were seen hurriedly

taking away their goods from the shops. It, however, was not that useful.

Managing director of Wasa Taqsem A Khan, ADC revenue Shahidul Islam and AC land Demra Abdul Malek were present during the drive.

Facebook

FROM PAGE 2
Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BIRC) which later takes steps through the Bangladesh Computer Security Incident Response Team and National Telecommunication Monitoring Centre.

Dhaka declaration

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"We'll maintain regular communication and share our experience."

Unesco Assistant Director-General for Education Qian Tang, Primary and Mass Education Minister of Bangladesh Mostafizur Rahman, and Education Ministry Secretary Soharab Hossain were, among others, also present at the conference.