

Killings of Mitu, SI Akram linked

The cop's sister tells IO

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The mystery surrounding the murder of Mahmuda Akter Mitu could be unraveled if her husband former SP Babul Akter and late SI Akram's wife Banani Binte Bashir alias Bonni were interrogated.

Jannat Ara Parveen Rini, elder sister of Akram, said this to Kamruzzaman, additional deputy commissioner of Detective Branch of Chittagong Metropolitan Police, during a meeting with him at his office yesterday. Rini's niece Murshida Jahan Doli accompanied her.

Kamruzzaman is also the investigation officer of the Mitu murder case.

Talking to reporters after the meeting, Rini said his brother was "murdered" in a planned way.

The murders of Mitu and Akram were pre-planned and linked, she alleged.

She claimed Babul was involved in his brother's "murder" in 2014. Babul had an extra-marital affair with Bonni which led to the killings, she added.

IO Kamruzzaman said Rini didn't hand over any written complaint to him, rather she gave him some

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The Bailey bridge over the Sutia river collapsed early yesterday when a rice-laden lorry was crossing it. The collapse suspended road communication between Mymensingh district and Phulbaria upazila for nine hours. The bridge was built a year ago as diversion whilst a new bridge was being built. The new bridge was hurriedly opened yesterday to restore the snapped communication.

PHOTO: STAR

Defence pact with India to be suicidal

Says BNP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP yesterday warned the government of any "anti-state" defence deals with India during Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's visit to the neighbouring country next month.

Speaking at a press conference at the party headquarters in Nayapalton, Senior Joint Secretary General Rizvi Ahmed also termed Hasina's recent "anti-India" statements mysterious.

Pointing to local newspapers of India, Rizvi said inking any military deal with India would be suicidal and against the country's independence.

"There will be no independence and sovereignty in the country if Bangladesh's security is dependent on India and our defence policy is taken as per India's will," he added.

He also said people of Bangladesh would never accept such "anti-state" defence deals and would come forward to resist anything like that.

On the premier's comment that BNP in 2001 came to power with the help of Indian intelligence agency

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QUALITY OF LIVING Dhaka ranked 214th among 231 cities

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka is listed among the worst cities of the world in terms of quality of living according to the annual ranking of consulting firm Mercer as Bangladesh keeps last year's poor rank.

Dhaka ranks 214th among 231 global cities with Vienna topping the list and Baghdad sitting at the bottom.

In terms of the overall quality of living survey, Vienna tops the list for the eighth consecutive year, according to the ranking survey released in London on Tuesday.

Zurich, Auckland, Munich and Vancouver follows Vienna on the top list.

Singapore tops another list in terms of offering the best infrastructure, as city infrastructure has been rated separately for the first time in the firm's ranking. Frankfurt and Munich are both placed second in infrastructure ranking.

"A city's infrastructure, or rather the

lack thereof, can considerably affect the quality of living that expatriates and their families experience on a daily basis," said Slagin Parakatil, Principal at Mercer and responsible for its quality of living research.

Access to a variety of transport options, being connected locally and internationally, and access to electricity and drinking water are among the essential needs of expatriates arriving in a new location on assignment, he said. A well-developed infrastructure can also be a key competitive advantage for cities and municipalities trying to attract multinational companies, talents, and foreign investments, he observed.

The firm's Quality of Living survey of cities helps companies and organisations determine compensation for the international staff. It uses dozens of criteria such as political stability, healthcare, education, crime, recreation and transport.

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Focused Tigers in control

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P Sara Oval turf in Colombo yesterday.

There were four changes in the Bangladesh side for the landmark match with Imrul Kayes, debutant Mosaddek Hossain, Sabbir Rahman and Taijul Islam taking the places of Mominul Haque, Mahmudullah Riyad, Liton Das and Taskin Ahmed respectively.

In spite of the shakeup, superb bowling from seamers Mustafizur Rahman, Subashis Roy and off-spinner Mehedi Hasan Miraz had gotten Sri Lanka to 70 for four at lunch and 149 for five at tea. With the new ball still fresh, Bangladesh will be looking to finish the job early today.

Dinesh Chandimal, who had lived a charmed life, was batting on 86 with skipper Rangana Herath keeping him company in an unbroken eighth-wicket stand of 43. There was a bit of concern too in the last session when, in the 76th over, a sweep from Herath off Taijul hit Imrul hard on his boot and he had to go off the field. Bangladesh team manager Khaled Mahmud however said after the day that Imrul would be able to field in the morning today.

In the last session, a highly irresponsible reverse sweep from Niroshan Dickwella off Shakib Al Hasan helped Bangladesh regain the initiative after a 44-run sixth-wicket stand. Upon the reintroduction of Bangladesh's highest wicket-taker, Dickwella chose to reverse-sweep only to be bowled for 34 as the ball

went on with the arm. Six for 180 became seven for 195 when Dilruwan Perera chased a wide ball from Mustafizur and edged to Soumya, who made a sharp take over his head look easy.

Earlier, the first session illustrated what a bowling attack singing from the same hymn sheet and creating sustained pressure can accomplish. Mustafizur was exceptional in his opening six-over spell, and along with Subashis kept the Sri Lankans scoreless in the first three overs of the match -- the first time Bangladesh bowled three maidens on the trot to start off a Test.

The seamers were getting swing with the new ball, and Mustafizur was concentrating on an off-stump line, with the ball going away from the left-handed openers. After Miraz replaced Subashis in the eighth over and bowled another maiden, the patience of the Sri Lankan openers began to wear thin.

Dimuth Karunaratne had faced 18 balls from Mustafizur and did not score a single run. On a number of occasions he tried to squeeze deliveries past point, but off the fourth ball of the ninth over, he looked for a release and the resultant edge rocketed at chest height towards gully, where Miraz took a sharp catch to send back the opener for seven.

Miraz, who had taken wickets but was expensive at Galle, seemed to have rediscovered the accuracy that brought him so much success in his debut series against England last October.

With there being purchase for the hard-spun ball as early as the first morning, Miraz just concentrated on dropping it on off stump and varying his pace and flight. His arm-balls too had the Sri Lankans in a tizzy. Kusal Mendis, the man-of-the-match in the first Test, coming in and playing across the line for a swept four would only have increased the 20-year-old spinner's confidence.

Soon Mendis had to walk back after the off-spinner's drift away from the right-hander beat the forward prod and the momentum carried him forward, allowing Mushfiquir to whip the bails off.

In the 16th over, Miraz produced another bit of magic. Holding one back and allowing it to dip and then zip sideways off the surface, he got Tharanga to push forward and that resulted in an edge taken low at first slip by Soumya. With Mendis back in the hut and Tharanga walking back for a 40-ball 11, Bangladesh had seen off the two batsmen that had caused them so much trouble in Galle, and it was now Sri Lanka in trouble at 35 for three.

Chandimal and Asela Gunaratne then set about doing the repair job. Subashis was brought on for the over before lunch, and the constant geeing up from the likes of Tamim Iqbal at mid off worked a treat. Working up decent pace, Subashis had Gunaratne inside-edging onto his toe, which caused the batsman some pain. The next ball was a perfect inswinger that

rapped the right-hander in front, and he did not even wait for the umpire's decision as he hobbled off and Bangladesh went to lunch after an excellent morning's work.

Around an hour after lunch, Bangladesh would count themselves a bit unlucky to not have Chandimal in the 39th over bowled by Shakib. The initial appeal seemed to have been for a leg-before decision as Chandimal played around a ball going on with the arm from around the wicket, but Soumya appealed for a catch after pouncing the deflection from the pad at slip. Umpire Ravi signalled out and Chandimal reviewed. Without Hot Spot or Ultra Edge, replays proved inconclusive and the decision was overturned, but in such scenarios the on-field call usually stands.

In the 46th over Chandimal swept Taijul to Miraz at deep fine leg and the youngster seemed to have completed a spectacular forward-diving catch, but the umpires were unsure about the cleanness of the take and replays suggested that the ball may have bounced before Miraz caught it, so Chandimal batted on. Two overs later Taijul took his first wicket when Dhananjaya de Silva played a rash pull shot to a ball that was not short enough and was bowled off his pads for a 54-ball 34, bringing an end to a 66-run fifth-wicket stand.

The Sri Lankans then went to tea without further damage on 149 for five, having steadied the ship somewhat.

Suicide bomber in Iraq

FROM PAGE 1

and College in the port city, relatives and neighbours said.

Abdul Qaiyum, who identified himself as Raja's uncle, and some villagers identified the man when The Daily Star showed them his photographs.

"He is my nephew. I saw him for the last time in 2012," said Qaiyum. Several locals said they heard Neaz had been staying in Dhaka and that he had gone to Australia for study.

One of his school friends said Neaz used to hang out and party with friends regularly. After graduation, he went to Australia to study at Deakin University.

"He used to lead a modern life but he was radicalised perhaps after going to Australia," said the friend, asking not to be named.

"He came back and got married. But he was a different person now. He had gone through some hardships. Taking advantage of this, some people may have misguided him during his stay in Australia."

Neaz left his wife and two daughters possibly in 2014 and never came back, he added.

However, The Daily Star could not independently verify if he indeed has been killed in Iraq.

According to the Rab, he had been living in Baridhara in the capital before going missing about three years ago.

The Rab list, prepared on July 20, also had a mobile number of one Javed Ahmed who was identified on the list as his "brother-in-law".

When The Daily Star called him yesterday, he declined to disclose his identity and said he was not related to Neaz anyway. He added he had no missing relatives.

Contacted, Rab's Legal and Media Wing Director Mufti Mahmud Khan said they learned about the SITE video through media reports and they would verify if anyone from their list indeed died in Iraq.

In the video posted on SITE, he criticised those who are "sitting idle"

instead of joining jihad.

Speaking in English, he questioned the meaning of living for 50-60 years without taking part in jihad.

"So wake up my brothers and know that jihad is farz [mandatory]. Know that Hijrah [immigration] is farz on you those who are able to make it. And those who are not able to make it, you have to work where you are. You have to fight against the Mushrekin and Kuffar [infidel] near you. You cannot just sit at home and do nothing," he said.

Islamic scholars say only misguided people can make such a call in the name of Islam.

He had an account on photo-sharing app Instagram -- @neazmorshedraja. Although he did not post any photo, he followed 98 people, including Akifuzzaman Khan and Shammur Raihan.

Akifuzzaman was killed in the Kalyanpur raid in July last year following the Gulshan café attack. Shammur, a cousin of Shazad Rouf Orko who was also killed in the raid, is an accused in a case filed with Shabbagh Police Station under anti-terrorism act.

Neaz also followed one Maksudul Hasan Anik (mhasananik) who has the flag of Islamic State as his profile photo, and two fervently religious accounts: @thetruthinthequran and @abuabdisalam. Among his followers is one Umm Khalid (@ummkhalidturkiye), who appears to be a member of the IS.

His Facebook status was last updated on May 25, 2015. He uploaded photographs of himself, his wife and daughters. His Facebook wall has many Islamic posts, some of them radical in nature.

A police official who tracks militants told The Daily Star that Neaz first went to Turkey and then to Iraq to join the IS-led war.

"Most probably, he used a cyber cafe in Cox's Bazar to enroll at a university in Turkey and left Bangladesh," he said, requesting not to be named.

Terrorism threat to persist despite

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"So, this is a continuous and persistent threat," said the professor, who authored 17 books, including "Inside al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror" published by the Columbia University Press.

Talking to this newspaper recently, Monirul Islam, chief of Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) unit of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, said at least 20 Bangladeshis went to Iraq and Syria to join IS. Some of them have already been killed and a few have returned.

Prof Gunaratna, who is also a trainer for national security agencies, law enforcement authorities and military counter-terrorism units, said it was important for the government to acknowledge IS presence in Bangladesh. It's because, he said, the Holy Artisan attack might not be the last terrorist attack in the country.

On July 1 last year, militants attacked Holy Artisan Bakery, an upscale eatery in Gulshan's high-security diplomatic zone, killing 20 hostages, mostly foreigners. Two police officials were also killed.

All the five militants and a restaurant chef were killed in a commando operation launched to end the siege.

IS reportedly claimed credit for the café attack while authorities termed it an act of "Neo JMB", an offshoot of local banned outfit Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB).

"Even though the government of Bangladesh is very effective in the fight [against terrorism and extremism], the nature of terrorism must be understood because it's a persistent threat," Gunaratna said.

He suggested Bangladesh government makes sure extremism and terrorism are fought simultaneously in the physical space through community engagement and in the cyber space.

"...they [the government] need to have a very strong security system both in the physical and cyber spaces to secure and protect Bangladesh and its

citizens."

Bangladesh is a country with secular principles and its government should continue its efforts to protect the beautiful spirit of its people. The people with such a spirit and culture will not allow extremism to take root in the country, he said.

However, Bangladesh now has to move beyond the operational counter terrorism response to create a more strategic process to handle the issue, Gunaratna, also a professor of security studies at Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, said at the Hotel Sonargaon where he participated in a three-day international conference.

The operational counter terrorism response means to catch and kill terrorists and disrupt the activities of their organisations.

While strategic response means building community engagement programmes to counter extremism and promote moderate views and rehabilitation in prisons, custodies with a view to deradicalise the inmates.

"If you don't rehabilitate and deradicalise them, they will pose a security threat after leaving the prisons and infect others with their ideology," he warned.

So, to prevent this from happening, the government should immediately launch a programme inside the prisons. As part of the programme, religious clerics would be engaged to deradicalise the radicalised inmates.

Gunaratna said teachers should also be engaged in the programme to educate the inmates and reestablish their social and family connection to bring them back to normal life.

Then, they would need psychological rehabilitation to deal with their anxieties, depressions and hatred, he added.

Gunaratna also suggested ensuring the participation of the country's leading musicians and sportsmen in the programme inside the prisons and detention centres for the deradicalisation of the inmates.

He also underscored the need for vocational trainings of the deradicalised ones in the fight against the curse.

About the ways to curb radicalisation through the social media platforms, he said the Bangladesh government in partnership with private sectors, NGOs and other institutions such as religious and educational institutions, media organisations and internet service providers should work together to open and run websites and other internet platforms to counter extremist activities online.

According to him, the religious leaders in Bangladesh can play a very effective role in this regard by opening up their own website where they would come up with the genuine interpretations of religion to counter the extremist views.

"Every cleric must protect and defend his religion and his nation," he said, adding they have to use the Quran and the Hadith to counter the misinterpretation of religion by the terrorists and extremists.

Saying that extremists and terrorists are not driven by any religion, he said the clerics must be protected so that they can send powerful anti-militancy message all over Bangladesh and beyond.

On militant outfit Ansar al Islam or Ansarullah Bangla Team, Gunaratna said the terrorist group also poses threat to the security of Bangladesh, but not to the same extent as the IS does.

"Certainly, both these groups are being fought by the government of Bangladesh very effectively and that the fight must continue," he added.

He also suggested that the government should work with its diplomatic missions overseas to have an anti-militancy programme for the expatriate Bangladeshi workers. The programme would aim at protecting Bangladeshis from being radicalised, he added.

'Sea sparkle'

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"Imagine there's a little animal that wants to eat this plankton and suddenly it flashes at you," he said.

Professor Hallegraef said while the phenomenon was not harmful to humans, there were still threats associated with it.

"This is an organism that eats other species and so if there's a huge amount of it, and basically it behaves like a vacuum cleaner and it eats away all the other plankton.

"So we have heard for example, on the east coast [of Tasmania] complaints from shellfish farmers that after this nocturnal bloom went through, suddenly the shellfish were hungry because there was nothing left to eat."

Professor Hallegraef said the phenomenon is very reported in Sydney Harbour in 1860 but it has expanded a great deal since then.

"In the 2000s we saw it really move southwards and now it's here permanently in Tasmania," he said.

"We have some evidence that ocean currents and the warming of the oceans have contributed to it -- it's definitely a species that is showing a spectacular range expansion in the last 20 years."

Professor Hallegraef said he would support the idea of turning these bioluminescence events into a small tourist industry for Tasmania.

Jubo League

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Critically injured Jahangir Hossain, 23, son of of Islam Malita, is undergoing treatment at Jessore Sadar Hospital.

Six persons have been arrested and preparation for filing of a case was ongoing, Kaliganj Police Station Officer-in-Charge Aminul Islam told The Daily Star. He did not reveal names of the arrestees "for the sake of investigations".

Bipul's cousin Rakib Hossain and uncle Israil Hossain said the attack was over previous enmity with a union parishad member elected last October. Bipul supported one candidate who had lost to the member, they added.