

Schoolboy Parag's abductor killed in 'gunfight'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The main accused in the sensational Parag abduction case was killed early yesterday in a "gunfight". The "shootouts" occurred between a gang led by the dead, Moktar Hossain Amir, 40, and police in south Keraniganj near the capital, Sha Migan Shafiur Rahman, superintendent of police in Dhaka, told The Daily Star.

Moktar was also the prime accused in 13 other criminal cases, including two for murders, filed with Keraniganj Model Police Station and South Keraniganj Police Station, the SP added.

On November 11 in 2012, miscreants led by Amir abducted six-year-old Parag Mondol from near his home in Shubhadda Paschimpara of Keraniganj. Parag was a KG-I student at Heed International School in the capital's Sadarghat area, according to police.

The criminals also shot and injured the boy's mother Lipi Rani Mondal, SEE PAGE 4 COL 6



A view of the picturesque greenery that no longer exists on the Sylhet-Fenchuganj road in Parairchak area. The photo was taken three months ago.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

The conundrum of social forestry

MINTU DESHWARA with FIROZ A MUZAHD

Running alongside the Dhaka-Sylhet railway track, there was once a picturesque road.

A dense canopy of around 1,200 Mahogany, Orjun, Eucalyptus, Shishu and various types of rain trees provided cool breeze for travellers all year round.

This serene greenery will no longer be seen on the nearly five-kilometre-long stretch of Sylhet-Fenchuganj road in Parairchak area.

Located in Dakkhin Surma upazila near Sylhet city, this wall of trees also worked as a natural curtain covering up a dumpsite of Sylhet City Corporation from travellers' sights.

The trees not only provided travellers with a soothing respite during hot summer days, but also delighted the train passengers with its view from far.

This eye-pleasing forestry came alive after 24 years of rearing and nurturing by 22 insolvent locals under a social forestry programme.

The Forest Department is the facilitator of the project and they recently started harvesting almost all the matured trees -- 1,095 to be exact, for timber.

As per the rules of social forestry programmes, trees are planted for consumption needs of the community that provides care for the trees. The proceeds from the sale of the trees are split three ways among the care provider (beneficiary), the Forest Department and the Roads and Highways Department.

One might still wonder whether felling almost all the trees at once defeats the very objective of the forestation programmes.

Artificial forestation programmes are encouraged worldwide as the trees planted in an area primarily help foster different ecosystems and species of insects and birds.

Therefore, felling or uprooting of trees in that entire area will endanger the ecosystems including insects and birds.

The families of Kestrel, Kite and other species of birds in the area are now endangered as their habitats, built on the trees on the Sylhet-Fenchuganj road, are being destroyed.

During a visit on the road in mid-July, this correspondent found more than half of the trees had already been chopped down.

According to the government's social forestry guideline adopted in 2004, mixed types of trees -- fruit, timber and medicinal -- have to be planted under a forestation



Left, after felling of the trees, logs lay beside the road before collection. Right, a view of the road after all matured trees on one side have been chopped down. The photos were taken in mid-July.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

project. Nearly 90 percent of the trees are allowed to be harvested, as at least 10 percent of the trees are prohibited for felling.

The guideline, however, does not prescribe forestation in phases so that different batches of trees are matured in different years. Such a provision would help maintain ecological balance in a project area since all the trees could not be felled at the same time.

The provision allowing harvesting 90 percent of trees at the same time goes against the forestation concept as the project area will again be deforested and the newly-built ecosystem there will be destroyed or endangered.

Fruit-bearing trees are not allowed to be felled in many countries and the social forestry policies there ensure that the environment of a project area is protected while both the government and the care provider reap the benefit through the harvesting of trees, said Dr Mohammad Sharaf Uddin, chairman of agroforestry and environmental science department at Sylhet Agricultural University.

Chopping down all the trees at the same time results in deforestation of the area again and it destroys the ecology that once became alive through the painstaking forestation work over many years. Besides, the temperature in the area also rises without any vegetation, Dr Sharaf added.

Dr Narayan Saha, former head of forestry and environmental science department at Shahjalal University of Science & Technology, said various types of trees should be planted under social forestry programmes and the trees should be planted in phases.



Man arrested for 'attempting to abuse' child

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Police yesterday arrested a man for his alleged attempt to abuse a four-year-old child in Double Mooring area of Chittagong city.

The accused Abu Bakkar Siddique, 55, of Mogpukur Par is a caretaker of the building where the child's family lives.

Mohiuddin Selim, officer-in-charge of Double Mooring Police Station, said after getting complaint from the family they arrested Siddique.

Victim's father said on Sunday after he and his wife went outside for work, Siddique attempted to abuse his daughter when she went to his house.

After returning home when his wife started searching their daughter, the child coming out of Siddique's house conveyed the matter to her, said the father.

Victim's father alleged that when he interrogated Siddique regarding the matter, he threatened him and said not to tell anybody.

A case was filed later accusing Siddique.

Canadian govt requested to deport Bangabandhu killer Nur Chy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law Minister Anisul Huq yesterday requested the Canadian government to deport Nur Chowdhury, a convicted killer of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, to Bangladesh for his execution.

He made the request when Canadian High Commissioner Benoit Pierre Laramée paid a farewell call on him at his secretariat office.

Anisul told The Daily Star that the Canadian government is not sending Nur Chowdhury back to Bangladesh as the North American country does not support the death penalty.

"A discussion between the foreign ministries of Bangladesh and Canada is going on regarding Nur Chowdhury. We will try till the end to bring Nur Chowdhury back to the country," he said.

Nur Chowdhury is one of the killers of Bangabandhu, the law minister added.

Listed criminal with eight associates held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Savar

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested a listed criminal and his eight cohorts with arms and Yaba tablets in Savar early yesterday.

The arrestees are Al-Amin, 34, of Bhabanipur area of Savar and his cohorts Shohel, 27, Imran, 19, Peash, 26, Amin Mia, 24, Welam Rojario, 29, Rasel Mia, 25, Abdul Motin, 20, and Shajal Hossen, 25.

Al-Amin is accused in 14 cases filed over murder, drug peddling and extortion, said Maj Abdul Hakim, company commander of Rab-4 (Nabinagar camp).

On information, a team of Rab-4 stopped a microbus at a check post on Dhaka-Aricha highway in Radio Colony area and arrested the criminals, said the official.

Two foreign pistols, two magazines, 11 mobile phone sets and 1,800 pieces of Yaba tablets were also seized from their possession, the official added.

Officer-in-Charge of Savar Police Station Mohshinul Kadir said two cases were filed and the arrestees were produced before a court.

Mentionable, on June 8 police raided Al-Amin's Shampur house to arrest him. But his family members and his aides swooped on police with sharp weapons and firearms and snatched Al-Amin from police custody. In retaliation, police also fired at them.

During the gunfight, one Ismail Hossen, who police claimed to be Al-Amin's close aide, was killed.

However, family members of Ismail denied the allegation and said Ismail, a businessman, had no link with Al-Amin.

Later, police filed a murder case accusing Al-Amin and his aides in connection with the incident.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina speaks with a blood donor during a blood donation programme marking the 42nd National Mourning Day commemorating the martyrdom of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. The programme was organised near Bangabandhu Memorial Museum on Road 32 at Dhanmondi in the capital.

PHOTO: PMO

'Seating service' buses to run two more months

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Amid widespread allegations that bus operators were charging extra fare in the name of "seating service", Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) yesterday once again extended the suspension of a special drive against the service in Dhaka for two more months.

The decision was taken at a meeting of an

eight-member committee at BRTA head office. The committee, which was earlier designated to make recommendations for quality passenger services in mass transport sector in Dhaka, could not finalise its proposals yet, said Mahbub-E-Rabbani, director (road safety) of BRTA, after the scheduled meeting.

"Drive against 'seating service' buses will

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আমাদের পণ্য

এসি কিনছেন? জেলে কিনছেন তো?

সঠিকভাবে এসি সংযোজন ও উৎপাদনের জন্য Psychrometric Test Chamber এ পরীক্ষা আৱশ্যক। যার মাধ্যমে এসির সঠিক BTU নির্ধারণ, ইন্ডোর-আউটডোরের উপযুক্ত ভারসাম্যকরণ এবং International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) 60335 Standard অনুযায়ী নিরাপত্তা নিশ্চিত করা হয়। বাংলাদেশে শুধুমাত্র ডাহলগেট এনসিই বাংলাদেশ Accreditation Board (BAB) কর্তৃক অনুমোদিত Psychrometric Test Chamber (NUSDAT-UTS) এ পরীক্ষা করা হয়। যারা Standard Maintain না করে Production & Assemble করলে তাদের এসি হয় অত্যন্ত নিম্নমানের ও ঝুঁকিপূর্ণ।

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ABUL MAYEEN CHOUDHURY passed away Monday July 31, 2017

He will be missed by his wife, Sughra Mayeen Choudhury; his son, Ikram Mayeen Choudhury; daughter, Sabrina Mayeen; daughter-in-law, Faria Nizam Mayeen; son-in-law Ikram Hoque; grand children, Ibrar & Simona.

Born January 15, 1936, Mr. Choudhury served the government of Bangladesh in prestigious positions. He has worked as the Inspector General of Bangladesh Police (IGP) and as a Secretary of the Bangladesh government.

Mr. Choudhury will be buried at Banani Graveyard following Namaz-e-Janaza after Zuhr prayers in Banani (Old) DOHS Mosque on Wednesday, August 2, 2017.