

Rape accused killed in Ctg 'gunfight'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A rape accused was killed in a "gunfight" with members of Rab-7 in Chattogram's Sitakunda upazila early yesterday.

The dead -- Iqbal Hossain Rana, 20, of the same upazila -- had been accused in a case filed over the rape of his neighbouring seventh grader in February last year.

Major Mehedi Hasan, deputy director (DD) of Rab-7, claimed that a patrol team of Rab-7 went to Amirabad area of Sitakunda on information that some criminals were gathering there. Sensing their presence, the criminals opened fire, forcing them to retaliate.

After the "gunfight", Rab men found a bullet-ridden body of Rana on the spot. They rushed him to Sitakunda Upazila Health Complex where doctors declared him dead, he added.

Rab also claimed to have recovered a gun and 11 bullets from the spot.

Harunur Rashid, sub-inspector of Sitakunda Police Station, said they received the body around 6:30am and sent it to Chattogram Medical College morgue for autopsy.



Children cool off under water jets in a fountain during a heatwave in Montpellier, southern France, yesterday. Forecasters say Europeans will feel sizzling heat this week with temperatures soaring as high as 40 degrees Celsius (104 degrees Fahrenheit) in an "unprecedented" June heatwave hitting much of Western Europe. PHOTO: AFP

What has this society

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"This is a picture of social degradation. This is a failure of the people to save him [Rifat]. Such a situation had not been seen in Bangladesh earlier," it said.

The court came up with the observation when the HC bench of Justice FRM Nazmul Ahsan and Justice KM Kamrul Kader passed an order on a suo moto (voluntary) move following newspaper reports on the Rifat murder.

Supreme Court lawyer Ruhul Quddus Kazal had placed before the bench some newspapers, including The Daily Star, which carried reports of the incident.

Criminals attacked Rifat, 25, with sharp weapons in broad daylight in front of Barguna Government College around 10:30am on Wednesday.

The entire incident, which was captured possibly on a mobile phone, shows the attack on the Rifat in Barguna town in front of the college where he had gone to drop-off his wife.

In the footage, his wife could be seen desperately trying to save him.

During the proceeding, the HC bench said, "If some people, who witnessed the incident, had come forward, he [Rifat] might have been saved. They [witnesses] might [have been] scared sensing that the killers are very powerful. The whole nation is shocked at the incident. What has this society come to?"

The HC also directed the government to issue a red alert so that the killers cannot leave the country and ordered law enforcers to immediately arrest all the accused in the case filed over the killing.

The HC asked Deputy Attorney General Abdullah-Al-Mahmud Bashar to communicate the necessary actions to be taken in this regard to the Inspector General of Police and submit a progress report before this court by July 4.

The court said it would keep an eye on the matter and interfere if it notices any deficiency.

At around 2:30pm, DAG Bashar told the court that he had communicated and talked to the deputy commissioner and superintendent of police of Barguna and the officer-in-charge of Barguna Sadar Police Station, as per its order.

The DC, SP and OC informed that the victim's father Abdul Halim had filed a murder case with the station naming 12 persons and five to six other unknown people.

Besides, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has ordered those involved in the killing to be brought to book as early as possible.

"It's a sad incident; it's a brutal killing. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has asked law enforcement agencies to arrest the killers at any cost," said Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader, at a briefing at his Secretariat office, reports BSS.

Meanwhile, Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal also assured that the killers would not be spared.

"All the killers will be brought to book. Police have already arrested two people in this connection.

"Police are not sitting idle. It's a saddening incident and we will disclose the reason behind the grisly murder after conducting a proper investigation," he said to reporters after attending a programme at Chattogram's Kazir Dewri area.

India keep winning

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the dangerous Chris Gayle early after a scratchy innings from the opener.

But it was Kohli who set up the win as he became fastest batsman to reach 20,000 international runs in his 417th innings -- India's Sachin Tendulkar and Caribbean batsman Brian Lara both required 453 international innings to reach the landmark.

Wicketkeeper-batsman M.S. Dhoni and Hardik Pandya boosted the total, putting on 70 runs for the sixth wicket to punish the otherwise-disciplined bowlers.

Pandya hit 46 off 38 balls while Dhoni remained unbeaten on 56, ending the innings with a big six.

The West Indies bowlers, led by paceman Kemar Roach, had kept India in check until the latter stages, stemming the flow of runs with regular wickets.

Roach returned impressive figures of 3-36 in his 10 overs, including the wicket of India opener Rohit Sharma for 18.

Kohli, whose 82-ball knock included eight boundaries, extended his fine run of form with some eye-catching shots that charmed a partisan crowd at Old Trafford.

West Indies were in trouble early in their reply when Gayle mistimed a short ball from Shami and was caught by Kedar Jadhav to the left of mid-on after struggling to just six runs off 19 balls.

Shai Hope tried to take the Shami on and hit him for a boundary but the bowler responded by rattling his stumps with the next ball as West Indies slipped to 16-2.

It was all downhill from there for a struggling Caribbean side who failed to maintain momentum after their opening World Cup win against Pakistan.

Paceman Jasprit Bumrah and leg-spinner Yuzvendra Chahal took two wickets each.

West Indies captain Jason Holder said: "The bowlers did a fantastic job on this surface. I couldn't ask for more but we let ourselves down with the bat.

"We didn't seize the moment but I would have taken chasing 268. We didn't do it.

"We have let ourselves down significantly in this tournament. The bowlers had a reasonable campaign but our batting has been too inconsistent. This is our weakest format of the three."

Two-time champions India next play hosts England in Birmingham on Sunday.

Eng approach

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they would have wanted to," Ponting told cricket.com.au, after England's 64-run loss to Australia at Lord's.

"They haven't made these 400-plus scores they have been talking about all the time. The scores have generally been a little bit lower in this World Cup, Justin [Langer] and I spoke about it earlier.

After winning four of their first five games at the ICC Cricket World Cup 2019, England stumbled to two consecutive losses while

batting second. Despite boasting the tournament's two highest totals (397 and 386), Eoin Morgan's side has failed while chasing on three occasions, and on two of them, the target has been under 300.

"The tournament plays a lot differently from a regulation five-ODI series, where England have come out and hit some huge scores in the last two to three years," Ponting said. "Was that game style going to stand up under pressure? We will have to wait and see in the next few games.

"They need to improve. They have a couple of big games to come, against India and New Zealand, they might have to play better than today (Tuesday) to win those games."

On Tuesday, 25 June, England's batting was undone by Jason Behrendorff and Mitchell Starc. The latter accounted for three of the top five batsmen, as the fast bowling duo's new-ball burst reduced England to 53-4 inside 14 overs.

Ponting, a three-time World Cup winner, said that England will have

to tinker their batting strategy based on the conditions on offer, and the opposition they are up against.

"Different conditions, different attacks - to come out and try and go really hard at Mitchell Starc upfront with the new ball is not an easy thing to do," he said. "Joe Root has been as good as anyone in the tournament, but Starc got one right through him early. That's up to them to work out. We have a game plan that will stand for us under pressure."

No corrupt official to stay in ACC

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imprisoned for three years.

The court said the ACC, which is an independent body, has to work honestly and transparently.

An innocent man cannot be imprisoned for even a single second, the HC bench said.

The court said Jaha Alam had told the trial court time and again that he was Jaha Alam and not Salek, the original accused in corruption cases. The National Human Rights Commission had said the same, but the ACC did not take any initiative for his release from jail.

The ACC and its lawyers cannot avoid responsibility for the

imprisonment of Jaha Alam, the HC said.

ACC's lawyer Khurshid Alam Khan replied that the lower court had a responsibility in exempting Jaha Alam.

Then, the HC bench said the lawyers, as "officers of court", too had a responsibility in this regard.

The court said the government had given sufficient powers to the ACC to fight corruption.

Terming this period a golden era for the country's economy, the court said, "Financial crimes might take place in the country. Therefore, the Anti-Corruption Commission will have to work with sincerity and transparency

so that such crimes can be prevented".

The HC also said if the ACC did not work sincerely and transparently, the country's economic development might be hampered.

It ordered the ACC to submit its internal committee's report on those responsible for implicating and imprisoning Jaha Alam to the court on July 11.

The court also fixed July 11 for further hearing on the issue.

Jute mill worker Jaha Alam, who had been wrongly imprisoned since February 2016, was released on February 4 this year following an HC directive which came after newspapers reported on his ordeal.

He was arrested in connection with cases filed by the ACC for misappropriation of money from Sonali Bank. The HC exonerated him from the charges on February 3.

The HC bench of Justice FRM Nazmul Ahsan and Justice KM Kamrul Kader on January 28 issued the suo moto rule asking the ACC and government why they should not be directed to compensate Jaha Alam.

The court passed the order and issued the rule after Supreme Court lawyer Amit Das Gupta placed newspaper reports on this issue before the HC bench for necessary orders.

Ex-health official

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accounts with different banks and deposited there Tk 284 crore.

They gained the amount from different projects to supply medical equipment and goods to medical colleges and hospitals under the DGHS, the statements said.

"To conceal the source of the money, they laundered it through various channels," reads one of the statements.

Abzal and Rubina on February 11 submitted their wealth statements to the ACC.

The commission found in the statement that the couple amassed about Tk 36 crore beyond their known source of income and concealed information of about Tk 7 crore in their wealth statement.

Abzal joined the DGHS as office assistant of a project in 1995. He had set up a syndicate at the health ministry and managed jobs for about seven of his relatives, including brothers and brothers-in-law, at different offices under the ministry.

The couple owns four five-storey buildings and a plot in the capital's Uttara.

The ACC also found that they have several other plots and houses at different places, including Dhaka and Faridpur.

In 2012, the graft watchdog first summoned Abzal for quizzing about his wealth, but he did not appear before it.

Bangladeshis' deposits rise to Tk 5,341 cr

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taken away from Bangladesh through over invoicing."

The transfer of money is evident in the import trends of this year and last year.

Last year, import surged, while this year it collapsed, he said. Such kind of trend indicates that money has been taken away from the country, he said.

Usually, illegal earnings are deposited in the Swiss banks, although Bangladeshis, including businessmen, deposit money in those banks.

Khaled said many people may have transferred money from Bangladesh to Swiss banks fearing uncertainty centring the general election.

Ahsan H Mansur, executive director of the Policy Research Institute (PRI), echoed his views and said, "It is because of the election last year. A huge amount of money has been

Bangladeshis living abroad also keep their money in Swiss banks, said the official, wishing not to be named.

Bangladesh businesspeople, who make transactions with firms or individuals in European countries for business purposes, may have also kept money in Swiss banks, added the official.

Over the last several decades, Switzerland has provided wealthy families around the globe with a convenient and safe place to stash their money.

The country's political neutrality, stability and tradition of bank secrecy have kept their fortunes beyond the reach of national governments and even the most determined tax collectors.

Offshore accounts are not illegal, but many people use those to hide cash from the tax authorities, say

experts.

Swiss banks have come under global pressure in recent times, as a number of countries, including India, are stepping up efforts to crack down on black money. A Europe-led clampdown has also been launched on tax evasion and corruption.

Experts, however, say data from the Global Financial Integrity (GFI), a Washington-based research organisation, gives a comprehensive picture about money laundered out of a country.

Bangladesh lost between \$6 billion and \$9 billion to illegal money outflows in 2014, according to a GFI report, published in 2017. The GFI also published its latest report in January this year which said some \$5.9 billion was siphoned out of Bangladesh in 2015 through trade misinvoicing.

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Oli, who was a freedom fighter, claimed that Jamaat leaders were having discussion regarding joining the platform.

"We will welcome the patriotic forces who want to free the country but we will not accommodate any traitor."

The Election Commission has scrapped the registration of Jamaat as a political party for its anti-liberation role in 1971. Jamaat leaders were involved in various war crimes during the country's liberation war and some of the party's top leaders have already been convicted.

Nusrat murder

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girl wearing Burqa told Nusrat that some people were beating her friend Nishat on the roof of the building.

Nusrat rushed to the roof and saw four more others, who were also in Burqa. But she could not tell how many of them were male or female.

They asked Nusrat to withdraw the sexual harassment case against Siraj. But Nusrat refused. They then pushed Nusrat to the floor and poured Kerosene on her before setting her ablaze, said the plaintiff.

Hearing her screams, an on-duty policeman and a guard rushed there and tried to douse the fire.

Later, she was taken to local upazila health complex and then moved to Feni Sadar Hospital. She was finally referred to Dhaka Medical College Hospital, said Noman.

Around 80 percent of Nusrat's body was burnt. After fighting for her life for five days, Nusrat died at the DMCH on April 10.

On May 29, Police Bureau of Investigation pressed charges against 16 accused, including Siraj Ud Doula.

Mother, son

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The victims are Altaf Hossain Mukul, 65, and his mother Rizia Khatun, 95, of Moheshpur village under Ullapara upazila.

"They stabbed Altaf and his mother while they were asleep at home. Police recovered the bodies with multiple stab wounds in the morning after being informed by neighbours," said Dewan Kawshik Ahmed, officer-in-charge of Ullapara Police Station.

Altaf and some villagers were at loggerheads over ownership of a piece of land on which Altaf had set up a mosque recently, said Altaf's daughter Roksana Hossain.

"My father was facing wrath from the villagers for setting up the mosque," she said.

Durganagar Union Chairman Md Afsar Ali told this correspondent that some of Altaf's relatives and acquaintances went against him after the mosque was built on the disputed land.

"The murderers put a sign with blood on a wall of the mosque after killing them," he said.

OC Dewan said, "Primary investigation suggests that there has been disputes between Altaf and villagers on various issues. The establishment of the mosque was one of them."

Three suspects have been caught, he said, but declined to give their names.

Oli launches new platform

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to free the nation," Oli also said.

Oli demanded mid-term election under a non-partisan interim government while presenting the 18-point demand.

"We will go to people with our demands. We will tell them clearly that we will not engage in any sort of destructive activities or assist anyone in carrying out criminal activities."

The demands also include forming expert committees to investigate financial scams and capital market scams, forming a legal aid committee to provide assistance to repressed leaders and activists, and an annulment of the digital security act.

On October 26, 2006, Oli and 13

other BNP lawmakers left the party and floated the LDP. At that time, Oli blamed the BNP leadership for corruption and misrule.

Later, the LDP sided with the Awami League, but contested the 2008 general election separately and won a parliamentary seat. On April 18, 2012, Oli joined the then BNP-led alliance.

"JAMAAT IS PATRIOTIC FORCE" Oli, who once very critical of the Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami, termed Jamaat as a patriotic force.

"Jamaat of 71 and Jamaat of 2019 are not same. They brought many changes within themselves. They are also a patriotic force," he said when

asked if Jamaat would be in the platform.

Oli, who was a freedom fighter, claimed that Jamaat leaders were having discussion regarding joining the platform.

"We will welcome the patriotic forces who want to free the country but we will not accommodate any traitor."

The Election Commission has scrapped the registration of Jamaat as a political party for its anti-liberation role in 1971. Jamaat leaders were involved in various war crimes during the country's liberation war and some of the party's top leaders have already been convicted.

Elites hogging political power

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Standing Committee on the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, said democracy should be participatory.

He said SDG-16, which focuses on promoting just, peaceful and inclusive societies, was an enabler to achieve other SDGs. "If we do not achieve SDG-16, we are not going to achieve other goals," he said.

René Holenstein, ambassador of Switzerland to Bangladesh, said people were interested in participating in the management of public affairs.

"What we need to do is to shape this democratic aspiration into rules and regulation and implement them," he said, adding, "Accountable, inclusive, transparent, and effective institutions

are key to achieving the SDGs."

CPD Distinguished Fellow Prof Rounaq Jahan said Bangladesh suffers from democracy deficit and that there has been erosion of the rule of law, and fundamental freedom over the years.

She said five things -- civil and political rights, rule of law, inclusion, participation of people, transparency and accountability -- need to be ensured for achieving the SDGs.

Rounaq also recommended decentralisation and creation of an atmosphere of free discussions and debates.

Tofail Ahmed, vice-chancellor of Britannia University, Cumilla, said SDG-16 is the key to achieving all other SDGs.

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Thousands flee erupting PNG volcano

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