

Minor girl killed, dumped in pond

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Police yesterday recovered the body of a six-year-old girl in Pabna's Sujanagar upazila who went missing three days ago.

The victim -- Tania Akter, 6, of the upazila's Borkhapur village -- went missing from her home on Thursday, said Bodruddoza, officer-in-charge of Sujanagar Police Station.

Police primarily suspected that the girl was strangled to death. Later, the murderer tied her body with bricks and drowned it in a local pond, he added.

Yesterday, locals noticed the body floating on the pond. On information, police rushed to the spot and recovered the body, he further said.

The body was sent Pabna Sadar Hospital morgue for autopsy.

The victim's father filed a case with the police station accusing one named and some unnamed people.

Later in the day, police arrested the lone named accused Arzu, 40, who is a neighbour of the victim.

According to the victim's family members, Tania's father and the accused had a long standing enmity and the murder might have taken place over that.

Regulator halts LR Global's investment in bdnews24.com

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The stock market regulator yesterday put a pause on LR Global Bangladesh's investment of Tk 50 crore in local online newspaper bdnews24.com and instructed the asset management firm to hand in all documents within 24 hours to verify if the transaction is compliant with securities rules.

As per securities rules, an asset manager can invest in listed securities, initial public offerings (IPO), pre-IPO placement shares and securities that are transferrable in the money market.

But bdnews24.com is a non-listed company.

"So, we want to check whether the investment follows all rules," said a top official of the Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission (BSEC) on condition of anonymity.

In 2015, LR Global Bangladesh, an asset management firm, was fined Tk 50 lakh for its investment in four non-listed private companies: Guardian Healthcare, Thyrocare Bangladesh, Property Investors and Tribeca Management.

Contacted, Reaz Islam, managing director and chief executive officer of LR Global Bangladesh, said: "We follow all the existing rules."

Toufique Imrose Khalidi, editor-in-chief of bdnews24.com, said: "We followed all rules and regulations and closed the transaction after a long process. LR Global has also consulted with lawyers."

Scotland releases man mistaken for French murder suspect

AFP, Glasgow

Scotland's police on Saturday released a man after he was mistaken for a French fugitive wanted for killing his wife and four children eight years ago.

French judicial sources had initially believed that they had finally caught up with Xavier Dupont de Ligonnes, who was subject to an international arrest warrant for the 2011 killings which transfixed France.

But Scotland's police said they had informed their French counterparts that forensic tests proved the man detained at Glasgow airport on Friday was not Dupont de Ligonnes.

"Inquiries were undertaken to confirm the man's identity. Following the results of these tests it has been confirmed that the man arrested is not the man suspected of crimes in France," the police, said in a statement.

"The man has since been released. The man and his family have no wish to speak to the media at this time and ask that their privacy be respected on this matter."

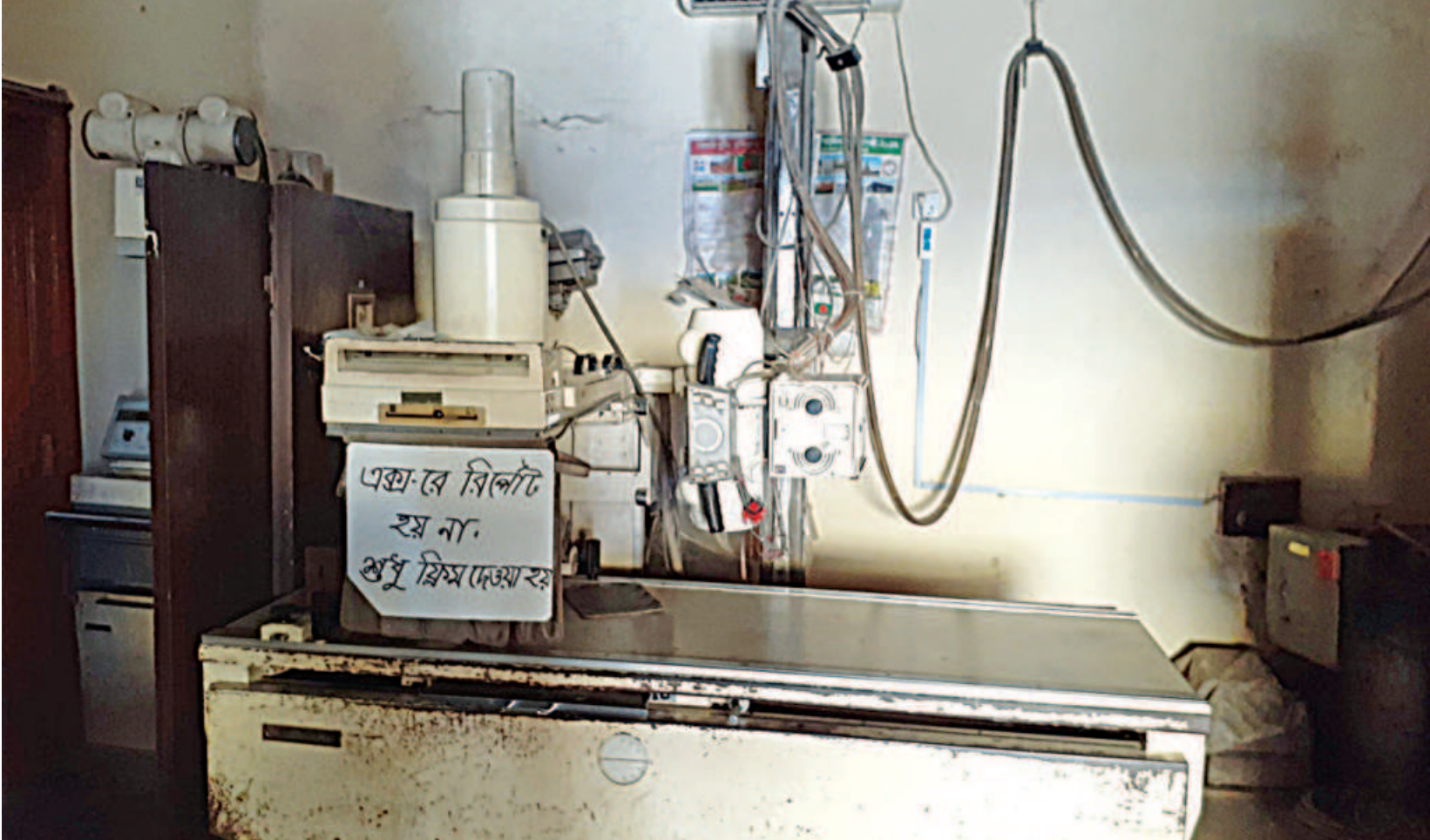
Sources close to the probe said the conclusion was reached after DNA tests.

The detained man was stopped in Glasgow after arriving on a flight from Paris following an anonymous tip-off, according to French sources close to the investigation.

Sources had said earlier that a fingerprint match had been made.

A police search was carried out on Friday at the arrested man's house in Limay in the western suburbs of Paris.

Neighbours told AFP the house belonged to Guy Joao, a man of Portuguese origin with French and British nationality and who is married to a Scottish woman.



A sign in front of the lone x-ray machine at Faridpur General Hospital reads "X-ray report is not given; only the film is given." The machine has remained inoperative for three months as due to the lack of a radiologists, resulting in patients having to pay almost three times as much to get the examination done at private diagnostic centres. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: SUZIT KUMAR DAS

37pc teachers rely on 'guidebooks'

FROM PAGE 1

teachers of religion, accounting, Bangla, Bangladesh and Global Studies, biology, ICT, higher mathematics, geography and history have subject-specific training.

"Many of these teachers resort to using [unauthorised] guidebooks for overcome their shortcomings," Rasheda said.

The researchers interviewed 3,000 teachers of 600, government and private secondary educational institutions across the country.

"GUIDEBOOKS"

English and mathematics teachers use the so-called guidebooks sold in the market to teach in every grade. Physics, chemistry and higher mathematics teachers use such books in grade IX and X classrooms.

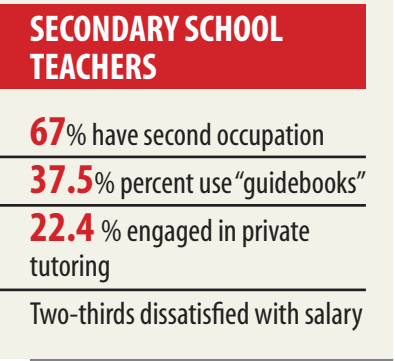
In all grades of the secondary institutes, 39 percent of English teachers, 33 mathematics teachers, 23 percent science teachers, 21.5 percent Bangla teachers and 17.1 percent Bangladesh and Global Studies teachers use such books.

The rampant use of "guidebooks" instead of the national textbooks and private tutoring are major challenges for improving education, the report observes.

Some of the "guidebooks" contain questions that are likely to appear

in exams. The answers are also given there. As a result, the students or teachers do not need to solve the tasks. All they have to do is memorise.

The use of guidebooks undermines the national textbooks and the teachers' involvement in private tutoring affects their classroom



teaching, the report says.

"Since these teachers fail to properly teach students, the latter become dependent on guidebooks and look for private tutors," said Rasheda.

PRIVATE TUITION

Although it is likely that some of the teachers may have not revealed the truth, 22.4 percent acknowledged that

they were involved in private tutoring.

About 50 percent of the maths teachers are involved in private tutoring. They are followed by English teachers with 37.5 percent of them involved in private tutoring.

The teachers revealed that they do this to earn some extra to compensate for their meagre income, the report mentions.

Teachers, mostly from the private educational institutions, reported that their salary and benefits were not enough to run families.

"Majority of the science teachers, including myself, are involved in private tutoring. I cannot maintain my family with the salary I draw from my school... I have to engage in private tutoring," a chemistry teacher of a school in Sylhet was quoted as saying.

SECOND JOB

"During our research we found that two-thirds of the teacher have a second job," one of the researchers Samir Ranjan Nath told this newspaper.

As a second job, 23.3 percent of the teachers are into farming, 19.5 percent into household management, 11.3 percent into private tutoring, 4.4 percent into small and medium business, 2.8 percent into aquaculture and 5.7 percent into other occupations.

The average annual income of a teacher is Tk 2,59,601. It is Tk

5,37,804 for government teachers, Tk 2,86,034 for MPO enlisted teachers and 1,41,035 for non-MPO enlisted teachers, Samir said.

Only 29 percent of the teachers were satisfied with their salary.

The teachers said they taught more than three subjects. On an average, they teach for 16 hours 10 minutes per week.

Question papers for exams were prepared through different means. Only 43.7 percent of the teachers said they themselves prepared the question papers.

The report says, 36.8 percent bought the question papers from teachers' associations, 14.4 percent from market, and 10.3 percent took the help of their colleagues.

THE GOVERNMENT SAYS

Speaking at the launching ceremony, Deputy Minister for Education Mohibul Hassan Chowdhury said the report was an objective assessment of secondary education. "Such assessments are needed to reveal the overall situation," he said.

He added that the guidebook sellers were powerful businessmen. These businessmen compel teachers to recommend the guidebooks to students. The teachers receive a cut from the sales.

No link

FROM PAGE 1

freedom of expression," Nahida Sobhan, director general of UN wing at the foreign ministry, told The Daily Star.

The ministry summoned Seppo yesterday, four days after her office issued a statement deploring the murder of Abrar Fahad allegedly for freely expressing his views on a bilateral deal recently signed between Bangladesh and India.

The statement issued on October 9 read that campus violence in Bangladesh over the years had affected and claimed too many lives, with apparent impunity for those bearing the responsibilities.

The statement also said the UN Bangladesh notes steps taken by the authorities to apprehend the alleged perpetrators and encourages independent investigations that should lead to justice, and measures to prevent such incidents further.

"Freedom of speech is a human right, and nobody should be harassed, tortured or killed for exercising it," the statement also read.

In a talk of the Diplomatic Correspondents Association of Bangladesh the same day, Mia Seppo said as a mother of two, she found such a killing "horrific and nightmarish".

Abrar, a second-year student of Buet's electrical and electronic engineering department, was beaten to death by a group of BCL men at the university's Sher-e-Bangla Hall in the early hours of October 7.

Before that, Abrar was asked if he was involved with Shibir, student wing of Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami. The last Facebook post of Abrar was critical of the agreements signed between Bangladesh and India on sharing the water of Feni river.

At the meeting with Seppo that lasted for nearly half an hour since 11:00am, Nahida said the government guarantees freedom of expression of the citizens.

The issue of Abrar killing came up during a regular meeting where we have discussed various issues, Nahida said.

A foreign ministry official said the fact that the government was not happy about the UN statement was communicated to the top UN official in Bangladesh.

Also, UN doesn't usually issue such a statement when any student is killed in a developed country, he told The Daily Star.

Mia Seppo couldn't be contacted for comments.

Charge sheet

FROM PAGE 1

Mujahid told the magistrate that following a Facebook post by Abrar, some students of the 17th batch brought him to room 2011 at Buet's Sher-e-Bangla Hall on October 6 evening, suspecting that he was an Islami Chhatra Shibir activist.

Mehedi Hasan Robin, organising secretary of Buet BCL, was the first to hit Abrar, a second-year student of electrical and electronic engineering at Buet. Anik Sarkar, information and research secretary of Buet BCL, hit him the most, the police official said quoting Mujahid.

Earlier, three other accused in the murder case had given confessional statements to magistrates. They are Deputy Social Welfare Secretary of Buet BCL Ifthi Mosharraf Shakal, Sports Secretary of the BCL unit Meftahul Islam Zion, and Anik.

According to their statements, Anik indiscriminately struck Abrar more than a hundred times with a stump in his knees, legs and arms.

At one stage, Abrar fell on the floor. The BCL men then pulled him up and started beating him again.

After a few hours, Abrar started vomiting. He threw up thrice before becoming motionless.

The grisly murder took place between 7:30pm on October 6 and 2:30am on October 7. The incident touched off a firestorm of protest on university campuses across the country.

Metropolitan Magistrate Nivana Khair Jessi recorded the statement of Mujahid, a third-year student of electrical and electronic engineering and a member of Buet BCL, and then sent him to jail.

Mujahid was arrested along with nine other accused immediately after Abrar's murder. He was placed on a five-day remand.

So far 19 people -- 18 accused and one suspect -- have been arrested in the murder case.

CHARGE SHEET NEXT MONTH

DMP Deputy Commissioner Masudur said they have made significant progress in the murder investigation.

"Four accused have already given confessional statements, admitting their involvement in the murder. They have also divulged information on other accused and suspects," he told The Daily Star last night.

He further said they would complete forensic tests of the mobile phones of the accused and the victim by the first week of next month.

2 REMANDED, 5 SENT TO JAIL

A Dhaka court yesterday placed two accused in the murder case -- Buet students Shamim Billah and Abu Huraira -- on a five-day remand.

The court also sent five other accused to jail on expiry of their five-day remand. They are Buet BCL leaders Mehedi Hasan Russell, Muhtasim Foad, Ishtiaq Hasan Munna, Moniruzzaman Monir and Muntasir Alam.