

Youth held over vandalism of idols in temple Police say arrestee mentally ill

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

Police have arrested a man on charges of vandalising idols in a Hindu temple in the capital's Khilgaon on Monday.

Arrestee Md Ezazul Hossain Khan, 31, appeared to be mentally ill. He received treatment for the illness, said police.

Ezazul entered Dev Mandir in Tilpapara area of Khilgaon after scaling the main entrance at 2:28pm on Monday.

He vandalised several idols and left the temple within four minutes, according to a case filed by the temple management committee with Khilgaon Police Station on Tuesday.

Abdul Ahad, deputy commissioner (Motijheel division) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, said they picked up the youth from the capital on Tuesday afternoon.

Yesterday, a Dhaka court placed the arrestee on three-day remand after police produced him before it seeking 10-day remand, he added.

"We are trying to be sure whether or not he is ill," Ahad told The Daily Star.

Narayan Chandra Bhowmik, president of the Dev Mandir management committee,

said Ezazul was carrying a sword tucked into his waist.

"CCTV footage showed that he drew the sword from his waist after entering the temple. The temple staffers were taking rest at that time," he said.

The youth, who was wearing black panjabi, pyjama and cap, broke the idols with a brick, said Narayan.

The Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) unit is assisting Khilgaon police in the investigation.

Investigators said Ezazul went to Lebanon in 2010 and returned home the following year.

Jamil Hossain Khan, the arrestees' father, said his son had been receiving treatment for mental illness at a hospital in the city's Shyamoli for the last seven years.

"Ezazul was given an injection three months back. He was supposed to receive another dose, but he did not receive it as we could not realise when he came home and went out in the last couple of weeks," he said.

A Dhaka court yesterday placed the arrestee on three-day remand after police produced him before it seeking 10-day remand.



WRONG EXAMPLE... Two policemen riding a motorcycle in the capital's Nayabazar yesterday. The law enforcers are responsible for ensuring that motorists take safety measures such as wearing seat belts in cars and helmets on motorcycles. However, these two are both seen without helmets.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Cinema should help reform society

PM tells film industry; announces Tk 1,000cr fund to upgrade halls in upazilas

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday urged the film industry to focus more on the country's Liberation War and sacrifice of the masses besides providing entertainment.

"Besides providing entertainment, films can reform the society, educate the people, inspire their patriotism and advance the country towards prosperity," she said.

The PM was speaking at a function marking the distribution of the National Film Awards 2020 among the winners in 27 categories.

The event was organised at the capital's Bangabandhu International Conference Centre (BICC), with the premier joining it through video link from the Gono Bhaban.

Hasina said films mirror life and they can also reform the society. "Films can contribute hugely toward social reform, teach philosophy and history."

She mentioned that films can spread the facts among the mass people about the real history of the country's independence.

The PM said people can learn about many unknown national events through films. Cinemas have the power to help remove irregularities and indiscipline from the society, she added.

Hasina said films can be a powerful medium to spread

the sense of responsibility and accountability towards the country and its people.

She said she plans to equip the country's film industry with modern technologies. "For that we need to transform the cinema halls at the upazila level into cineplexes."

The premier said the government has created a Tk 1,000 crore fund for this purpose.

She also put emphasis on transforming the analog system of old cinemas into digital one for the new generation.

The PM said steps have been taken to build a modern film complex to protect the cinema industry.

Hasina said by nature the Bangalees accept the culture and arts of the country in their hearts.

That's why Bangladesh's nationhood would flourish more through films, literature and culture in future, she observed. She lauded the performance of the artistes in the awarded films.

On the PM's behalf, Information and Broadcasting Minister Hasan Mahmud handed the awards to the 32 winners in 27 categories.

The minister, and Chairman of Parliamentary Standing Committee on Information and Broadcasting Ministry Hasanul Huq Inu also spoke at the programme, among others.

Actor Raisul Islam Asad addressed the event on behalf of the awardees.



What's in the feast? Tigers tame

FROM PAGE 1

taking a side and Russia and its allies the other, Khan said.

"Bangladesh is trying to strike a balance, but the US wants to take Bangladesh to its side," he added.

The US wants Bangladesh to be its partner in the Indo-Pacific Strategy (IPS).

The IPS speaks of a free, open and international rules-based system in the Indian and Pacific Oceans and cooperation among the regional countries for development.

Analysts see it is aimed at countering China, from where Bangladesh procures most of its defence equipment.

Asked how Dhaka would strike a balance between the US and China, Khan said: "Dhaka needs to engage with both the sides — both politically and diplomatically. The challenge is how we do it. We need a lot of capacity building for communication and negotiation."

Dhaka has made clear that it will be with the economic component of the IPS, but not join any military alliance.

While Washington said it would soon release a policy on the economic aspect of the IPS, it also expressed its eagerness for security cooperation.

It has handed a draft agreement of the General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA) to Dhaka to make sure that the classified

military information is protected.

The US has been seeking to sign two defence deals — GSOMIA and Acquisition Cross-Servicing Agreement — as Bangladesh sought to buy advanced equipment from the US as part of its goal to modernise the military by 2030.

There has been no progress so far, but now Bangladesh is actively considering signing the two deals, diplomatic sources said.

Bangladesh has defence agreements with India, China, Turkey and some other countries and there is nothing wrong in signing a deal for improving its military strength, which is important for protecting its land and maritime boundary, said Shamsheer Mobin Chowdhury, a former foreign secretary.

Joint naval exercises with various countries in the Indian Ocean, including those of India, Japan, the US, the UK, Australia, took place.

"These are meant to improve the naval capacity of the country. So, signing a defence agreement does not mean joining a military alliance."

The US is the single largest export market for Bangladesh and maintaining a strong relationship is of the essence, Chowdhury said.

"It is not necessary that you will agree on everything, but the engagement is a must for better understanding of each other," he added.

FROM PAGE 1

first away bowler in ODIs in the last decade to scalp five wickets in South Africa after Sri Lanka's Lasith Malinga in 2012.

That in itself gives an idea of the gargantuan nature of the Tigers' performance in this series, but credit should go also to the skill, guile and importantly the mentality of not giving away things when the chips were down that was portrayed by Tamim's troops and left a lasting mark in a historic series win.

Over the course of the past year-and-a-half, the likes of Taskin and Shoriful Islam started to give the side confidence in the idea that Bangladesh had a pace attack for conditions that did not suit their spinners. By the time preparations for the South Africa series had begun, the pace attack was

Titas flayed

FROM PAGE 1

Rashid Mullah whether he really wanted to snap illegal connections with the help of law enforcers.

Haronur admitted having several lakh illegal connections and said that a process to cut them off had already started.

When he said they have an internal taskforce for the job, Shamsul said, "We have no faith in your internal taskforce as you did not complete the job in years."

The Titas MD said Titas covers a huge area with limited manpower, which is why it was difficult for them to look after the matter properly. "When we snap illegal connections at one place, new connections

raring to prove their mettle in alien conditions.

The seven-wicket defeat in the second ODI could have dented confidence. And when South Africa's opening batters were again on the attack after the hosts opted to bat in the third ODI, there was real danger of things slipping away. Going back to basics has often been mistaken for untidy tactical changes, but here the Tigers showed all the nuances a victory of this calibre deserved.

Tamim went to his hero of the first match in Mehedi Hasan Miraz in just the fifth over and he eventually got the better of destroyer-in-chief Quinton de Kock in the seventh over. The complexion of the game began to change thereafter and those were the little details that mattered as the Tigers made a real statement.

appear at the other."

He claimed they snapped over one lakh such connections since December.

When Shamsul asked why does the government, which owns 75pc shares of Titas, take the profits instead of reinvesting it, the MD kept mum.

Titas documents show it initially made Tk 345 crore in profit last year. After it paid Tk 217 crore to all its shareholders and Tk 440 crore to the National Board of Revenue (NBR), the profit turned into losses, amounting to Tk 312 crore.

"Even during the pandemic situation, the [Titas] board members held Zoom meetings and took the honorarium," Shamsul said.

Taskin got a bit lucky when Kyle Verreyne dragged one onto his stumps after a very positive start, but it gave him the confidence to begin to hold sway as he came in to bowl in different spells.

Bangladesh made that extra bounce on the pitch materialise and the fielders were on their toes. Taskin came up with a brilliantly bowled out-swing that bounced just that bit extra and took Janneman Malan's outside edge.

Shakib made sure opposition skipper Temba Bavuma did not last long and Shoriful then got the better of Rassie van der Dussen, leaving the Proteas slumping at 83 for five.

Taskin pressed home the advantage as he picked up Dwaine Pretorius for his third scalp before getting the better of David Miller

He also asked why Titas took money for many new connections when the government decided not to provide them for the time being.

The MD said they want to refund such customers, but "no one is willing to take the money."

Mohiuddin Ahmed, convener of The General Citizen Society, said illegal connections are given both in collusion with Titas employees and without their knowledge.

"The number of the illegal connections will not be less than the legal ones," he said, adding that the gas distributing companies act as a syndicate while proposing gas price hikes as all of them recommend

and Kagiso Rabada in the 29th over.

All three departments came up trumps throughout the series, which proved to be South Africa's undoing.

A stunning catch from Yasir Ali at a crucial moment of the first ODI, the consistency and skill of Miraz in coming back into the attack effectively after being taken to the cleaners in his first four overs and Shakib's immense knock of 77 in the same game coupled with the Liton Tamim stand in both the first and third games all come to mind along with Taskin's perseverance in the story of Tigers' epic series win.

Tamim's leadership had also been of high quality and his innings of 87 was the cherry on top of the performances and the way he led his side to conquer a new frontier.

the same hikes.

Mohammad Ali Khokon, president of Bangladesh Textile Mills Association, said they need to pay Tk 27 for gas for producing one kg of thread.

"Our products' prices depend on the international market. We will be able to survive only when the production cost will be low. Don't let our industry have the same fate as jute."

Golam Sarwar, a member of Ceramic Manufacturers and Exporters Association, said, "Our industry fully depends on gas. Our machines are okay, we have technologies and workers, but we face losses at times for the lack of uninterrupted gas."

Teen found murdered in Tangail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Throat slit body of a schoolboy, who had gone missing Tuesday night, was recovered from a pond in Kagujipara village of Tangail's Kalihati upazila yesterday morning.

OC Mollah Azizur Rahman of Kalihati Police Station said it looks a sharp weapon was used in the murder of the victim, Mohammad Rahat, 14, of the district's Baniara village.

Police have quizzed several friends of the class-VII student of Balla Coronation High School to find out the motive behind the murder, he also said, adding that they were investigating the matter.

Form bodies to receive sexual harassment complaints: SC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Supreme Court committee yesterday directed the judges concerned to form committees for receiving complaints of sexual harassment at lower courts across the country.

All district and sessions judges, metropolitan sessions judges, chief judicial magistrates and chief metropolitan magistrates were ordered to submit reports to the SC committee after constituting the bodies in 15 working days.

The five-member SC committee was formed in November last year to receive complaints of sexual harassment on court premises, conduct inquiries into them and make necessary recommendations to this effect.

Justice Krishna Debnath, now a judge of the SC's Appellate Division, was made chairperson of the committee.

The other members are: Justice Kazi Zinat Hoque, also an HC judge; Md Badrul Alam Bhuiyan, registrar of the Appellate Division, advocate Fawzia Karim Firoze and advocate Tamanna Ferdous.

Earlier on May 14, 2009, the HC had directed the authorities to form the five-member committee headed by a woman at every workplace and institution to investigate the allegations of sexual harassment.

JMB man jailed for 14 years in Lalmonirhat

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

A local court yesterday sentenced Talim Prodhan, a member of banned militant group JMB, to 14 years rigorous imprisonment.

Lalmonirhat District and Sessions Judge Mizanur Rahman, however, acquitted another accused, Abdus Sabur, as charges against him could not be proved, said Public Prosecutor Akmal Hossain Ahmed.

According to court and police sources, a Rab patrol team arrested Talim raiding the Bazar area of the district's Patgram upazila on September 15, 2018. The Rab also claimed to have recovered books which could incite religious extremism.

Akmal said the convict was an IT expert of JMB, who dragged many youths into militancy.

Vegetable exports grounded

FROM PAGE 1

Fruits, Vegetables and Allied Products Exporters Association (BFVAPEA) told The Daily Star yesterday that 14 days have passed since the scanner broke.

"As a result, we could not send any vegetables or other perishable items to EU countries... If we can't export, buyers won't wait for us. They will import from another country."

"We couldn't send the products because of a fault at the airport, and the very alarming thing is that this is happening on a regular basis," he said.

Another vegetable exporter said the scanner became inoperative thrice over the last six months and so the buyers are increasingly relying on other countries.

Mansur said if agricultural products are not exported, they will not be able to keep them in warehouses as those are perishable, so traders are seriously affected.

"As we are failing to meet the demands of Europe on time, it is India, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Malaysia who are entering this market," Mansur said. "And if this situation continues, buyers will not want to import perishable foods from Bangladesh," he said.

Leaders of BFVAPEA said they are currently exporting very small

amounts to EU countries via Qatar, but it is hugely expensive as scanning in Qatar maintaining the UK standards is very costly.

They said Qatar Air can carry a maximum of two tonnes of products. Surviving in a competitive market in this way is unrealistic.

Mansur said they repeatedly sent letters to Caab to fix this frequent problem but they did not get fruitful responses.

"This is basically the country's loss. If other countries occupy the UK market, we will not be able to recapture that market."

According to BFVAPEA, 120 tonnes of agricultural products and perishable items are exported to different countries daily. Of this, 80 percent goes to the UK.

Mansur said they have incurred a loss of Tk 70 crore in the last 14 days due to inability to export agricultural products to European countries.

According to BFVAPEA, 82,510 tonnes of fruits and vegetables worth Tk 1,419 crore have been exported from Bangladesh in FY 2019-20, and Tk 1,029 crores' worth in the following fiscal year.

Exporters said Caab charges six cents (Tk 5) per kg for scanning goods and four such scanners could have easily been bought from earning of just one week.