

No Leads in 6 Months Since Manipuri Student was Cremated by Noida Police

Courtesy : The Wire
New Delhi, May 14

It has been six months since Manipuri student Pravish Chanam mysteriously died after he disappeared from a music concert in Noida. Yet, his family refuses to pick up his ashes from Shavdah Griha Antim Nivas, where he was cremated four days after the 22-year-old student's body was found in Murga Market, sector 31.

On September 8, Pravish had gone to Knowledge Park to catch the band, Chainsmokers, along with three friends, also from Manipur. The next day, his older brother, Ravi Kant Chanam, a resident of Vijaynagar in North Delhi, received a call from Pravish's number but it was one of his friends, Ashok, on the line, who reported that Pravish was missing from the concert venue, leaving his cell phone and wallet behind for safe keeping. After going through a harrowing ordeal of filing a missing persons report in the Knowledge Park police station and a series of follow-ups, Ravi learned that his brother was not only found dead but also cremated by the Uttar Pradesh police.

"The police cremated two bodies that day without properly marking either. So we don't know whose ashes we will be collecting," said Ravi. Although Pravish's last rites were completed on September 16 in Imphal, Manipur, the family has vowed to rest only after the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) conducts an inquiry. Despite repeated requests to send the clothes his brother was found in for laboratory tests, Ravi is yet to receive an update on the case. Ravi said his family has given up all hope on the Noida police cracking the case, partly because of their lackadaisical attitude. To appeal for the case to be transferred to CBI, they met several officials, including home minister Rajnath Singh and his deputy, Kiren Rijiju, as well as Manipur chief minister Biren Singh. Apart from this, protest rallies were organised in Delhi and Imphal.

In January 2018, Uttar Pradesh chief minister Adityanath wrote to the home minister informing him that the case was ordered for transfer from sector 20 Noida police station to CBI for investigation. Not only that, the UP government issued an order, "according consent to the member of the Delhi Special Police Establishment in the whole of the State of Uttar Pradesh for investigation" in this case (a copy of which has been accessed by this reporter).

Despite official instructions in this case, the CBI is yet to commence investigation.



"The case is not registered with us", the chief information officer at the CBI told this reporter. When asked for a reason, he said, "CBI takes a call on cases to be registered based on its own norms and evaluation".

Rijiju said the CBI was engulfed in several cases referred to them. "They also have limitations, like manpower. I'm personally very upset that this case did not move in the direction that we would like to see, because it's a huge tragedy", he told this reporter in an interview held earlier. He said all the short-term recommendations of the Bezbaruah Committee report from 2014 had been implemented by the government.

Among other changes, the Bezbaruah Committee recommended empowering the North East Special Police Unit to have the power of a police station to register cases and provide directions to various police stations in cases related to people from the region. While a functioning North East cell in New Delhi has been established, Rijiju claimed that every city now has a special cell for NE people. "Police is for everybody. Can you imagine a police station in Imphal or Itanagar for people of Bihar or UP? You can't just cross the limit of the provisions of the law or the system", he added.

The Bezbaruah Committee was set up following the murder of a 19-year-old student, Nido Tania, the son of a Congress MLA from Arunachal Pradesh. Many such cases are routinely covered by the media, but do not cause that level of outrage, said Liyi Marli Noshi, a lawyer from Arunachal Pradesh who practices in Delhi's Saket court. "Every day, cases like Nido Tania are happening but to bring media attention to it, a person has to be from a rich family", said Noshi, one of the North Eastern lawyers empaneled for legal assistance, as per the committee's recommendation. The Chanam family has

suspected foul play since day one, given several inconsistencies in the versions of the police and government district hospital. The investigating officer, SHO Anil Kumar Shahi told the media in September that Pravish died of drug overdose, as per the post-mortem report. However, the post-mortem report clearly states "shock and haemorrhage due to head injury" as the cause of death. It should be mentioned that while the report says "eye bulging and bloated face", no trace of drugs were found. The medico legal report filed by the hospital on the day of departure mentions "alcoholic smell present in the breath" and "seizure like movement of person at the time of admission" apart from a recent injury "caused by hard and blunt object, simple in nature". Moreover, the report (prepared at 4.30 p.m. on September 11, 2017) states that the body was "about 2 to 3 days old" at the time of conducting the post-mortem.

"Why did the hospital wait for two days to conduct the post-mortem?", Ravi wondered. At sector 20 police station, a police official told this reporter that the inquiry in this case was going on, which is documented in a progress report every month. SHO Manish Saxena, the present IO appointed to the case, said he was transferred to the PS only this month and the previous IO would be better placed to comment. Despite several attempts to contact Anil Kumar Shahi, who became SSP after former SSP Luv Kumar moved to Lucknow as DIG, Prisons, did not respond to queries. In September, Kumar suspended three police officials and shunted the SHO at Knowledge Park PS to police lines for dereliction of duty. Strangely, in the CBI proforma (a copy of which has been accessed by this reporter) the UP government states that "the investigation is still pending and no substantial progress could be made till now". However, in justifying the case to be referred to CBI,

they mention, "a possibility that persons from native state of deceased or neighbouring state like Delhi, Haryana, Rajasthan etc. are behind this crime".

It's unclear why the government ruled out the possibility of people from Uttar Pradesh being involved since Pravish's body was recovered in Noida. Ravi, however, says the friends who accompanied Pravish on the day of the concert have not been seen after September 11, when they accompanied him to the Knowledge Park PS.

"On September 13, all his friends (except those who were with him) came to the station to figure out his whereabouts. None of the three ever provided information to any of the police stations. They didn't even contact us after we found out that he was no more or attend his funeral", Ravi said, unable to mask his suspicion. Despite attempts to contact Ashok, he was not reachable.

As per the CCTV footage that the police handed to the family (accessed by this reporter), Pravish can be seen walking out barefoot from the hospital at 7.30 a.m. the morning after he was admitted. The CCTV footage from Noida Stay, about 900 meters away from the hospital, shows him walking under the flyover. However, the footage has a time lapse of 81 seconds in the video, after which Pravish disappears from the frame. How did he manage to reach the Murga Market, which is a good 15-minute walk (as per Google maps) in his condition, remains a mystery.

As the family keenly waits for the CBI to initiate an inquiry into the case, so far handled with 'utmost negligence', the silence of the authorities and the dodging of questions related to the case indicate that a breakthrough may still not be on the horizon. In fact, it is likely to further drag on, caught in bureaucratic red tape.

(The write is Makepeace Sithou. He is a freelance journalist based in Guwahati.)

National & International News

53 killed, 39 in UP, due to lightning, thunderstorms: MHA

Agency
New Delhi, May 14

As many as 53 people were killed, including 39 in Uttar Pradesh, due to lightning and thunderstorms in four states since last night, the Home Ministry said today.

As per information received from state governments, 39 people died in Uttar Pradesh, nine in Andhra Pradesh, four in West Bengal and one in Delhi due to lightning and thunderstorms during the intervening night of May 13 and 14, a ministry spokesperson said.

Fifty-three people were injured in Uttar Pradesh, 11 in Delhi and one in West Bengal. Dust storms and



thunderstorms had wreaked havoc yesterday in Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh and the national capital, leaving behind a trail of destruction. High-velocity winds uprooted trees and affected road, rail and air services last evening in several places in north India, including Delhi.

Thunderstorms also occurred at isolated places in Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, Assam, Meghalaya, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu, the India Meteorological Department had said yesterday.

Suspected Pakistani terrorist arrested in Mumbai, planned to kill top politician

Agency
Mumbai, May 14

A 32-year-old man, who is suspected to be a terrorist from Pakistan, was arrested by Maharashtra's Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) in Mumbai on May 11. The accused, identified as Mirza Faizal Khan, was also produced in court on the same day.

Khan, who was allegedly planning to assassinate a top politician in Mumbai, had come to India after training at a camp operated by a terror outfit in Pakistan, reported PTI.

"He was called to Pakistan by a person who is wanted in for terrorist activities in Mumbai. The arrested man first went to Sharjah to meet this wanted person where the latter

provided him with logistics support," the news agency quoted an official as saying. "After spending some time in Sharjah, he was sent to Dubai and from there to Karachi. He then attended a training camp there run by a terror outfit," the official added.

He also added that the extremist outfit has the support of Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). During interrogations, Khan revealed that the terror group planned to carry out attacks on "public utilities" and crowded places. Besides planting bombs in some parts of the nation, the accused, who has received training as a suicide bomber and in making explosives, had plans to kill a politician from the

ruling party of Maharashtra. "He has been questioned and it is learnt that apart from conducting terror strikes in India, he was also assigned the task of bumping off a senior politician who is in power now," The Times of India quoted a source as saying. Khan was nabbed after the Kolkata Special Task Force (STF) received information about Khan. "He was picked up after the Kolkata STF got a tip-off about his training. The team kept a watch on his movements and his communication with terror groups on the internet," an ATS source said. Meanwhile, the police are probing the case and Khan has been remanded to ATS custody till May 21.

'Two suicide bombers blow themselves up at Indonesian Police Headquarter'

Agency
France, May 14

Two terrorists on a motorcycle blew themselves up at a police headquarters in Indonesia's second city Surabaya on Monday, wounding at least 10 people including officers, authorities said, a day after a deadly wave of suicide bombings hit churches.

Citing CCTV footage from the scene, East Java Police spokesman Frans Barung Mangera said a man and a woman on the bike stopped at the security checkpoint. "That's where the explosion happened," he added.

"Two people were riding (on the motorcycle) and a woman was sitting at the back." The authorities said the wounded included six civilians and four police. Ambulances and the bomb squad descended on the chaotic scene with the CCTV images showed the mangled wreckage of a motorbike at the security gate at the headquarters in the heart of the city.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility after the latest suicide bombing.

"This is a cowardly act, undignified and inhumane," Indonesian President Joko Widodo told reporters in Jakarta.

"There will be no compromise

in taking action on the ground to stop terrorism."

The lethal explosion comes just a day after a family of six including two young daughters staged suicide bombings at three churches in Surabaya during Sunday services.

At least 14 civilians have died as a result of that attack, which was claimed by the Islamic State group, and the toll could climb with more than 40 injured in hospital.

Multiple bombings

The archipelago nation of some 17,000 islands has long struggled with Islamic militancy, including the 2002 Bali bombings that killed 202 people — mostly foreign tourists — in the country's worst-ever terror attack.

Sunday's church bombings were Indonesia's deadliest attack in years. The attackers — a mother and father, two daughters aged nine and 12, and two sons aged 16 and 18 — were linked to local extremist network Jamaah Ansharut Daulah (JAD) which supports IS, police have said. Authorities said they believed some of the family members had recently returned from Syria, where hundreds of Indonesians have flocked in recent years to fight alongside IS in its bid to carve out a caliphate ruled by strict Islamic law.

A further three people in another family were killed and

two wounded when another bomb exploded at an apartment complex about 30 kilometres (20 miles) from Surabaya, just hours later, police said.

The mother and one child died from the explosion while police said they shot dead the father who was carrying a bomb detonator.

Two other children were injured in the blast and were taken to hospital.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the apartment bomb.

In the church attacks, the mother, identified as Puji Kuswati, and her two daughters were wearing niqab face veils and had bombs strapped to their waists as they entered the grounds of the Kristen Indonesia Diponegoro Church and blew themselves up, police have said.

The father, JAD cell leader Dita Priyanto, drove a bomb-laden car into the Surabaya Centre Pentecostal Church while his sons rode motorcycles into Santa Maria church, where they detonated explosives they were carrying, according to authorities.

JAD, led by jailed radical Aman Abdurrahman, has been linked to several deadly incidents, including a 2016 gun and suicide attack in the capital Jakarta that left four attackers and four civilians dead.

Seminar on capitalism with reference to democracy and communism held

IT News
Imphal, May 14,

One day seminar on "A Critical Review of Capitalism" with special reference to 'Democracy and Communism' was held at Press Club of Manipur yesterday. The seminar was inaugurated by Prof. Adya Prasad Pandey, Vice-Chancellor of Manipur University.

Rev. Father Devassy

Pudussery, Priest Home Matripukhri, Retired Prof. Ksh Bimola Devi, Manipur University were dignitaries on the dais.

Dr. Sh. Babu Singh Paul, Retd. Principal YK College, Wangjing delivered the welcome and keynote addresses. Giving his presidential speech, Prof. Adya Prasad Pandey said India is a land of multi-

religious, multi-ethnic society but culturally we are united. We Indians always consider the whole world as a family and our social, cultural and family acceptance is different from foreign countries, he added. Professor further said that our economic system have developed according to the need and demand of our people. Similarly, other countries' economic systems

have developed according to their requirement like capitalism and communism. Drawing a comparison with India and other countries, he stated that Indians are culturally connected with each other but the scene is different in foreign countries. Other dignitaries also spoke about the theme of the seminar on today's inauguration function.