

N'ganj teacher didn't hurt religious belief

Finds judicial probe; report submitted to HC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A judicial probe has not found any authentication of the allegation brought



Shyamal Kanti

brought against Narayanganj school teacher Shyamal Kanti Bhakta of making derogatory comments about religion in May last year.

The chief metropolitan magistrate of Dhaka, who conducted the inquiry, however, said in the report that Shyamal was forced to

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N'ganj teacher

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squat holding his ears on instructions of local Jatiya Party lawmaker AKM Salim Osman, a reliable source said.

The probe report was submitted to the High Court through the attorney general's office yesterday as per the court's earlier order.

On August 10 last year, the HC rejected a police inquiry report as law enforcers failed to identify those who compelled Shyamal to squat in public and ordered the CMM to conduct a judicial inquiry into the incident.

Deputy Attorney General Motaheer Hossain Sazu, who received the probe report from the CMM office and would place it before the HC, refused to disclose what was written in the report, saying it was a sub-judice matter.

The HC will hold the hearing on the issue next Sunday, he said.

CMM of Dhaka Sheikh Hafizur Rahman told The Daily Star he had recorded statements of 27 witnesses while investigating the matter. His office handed over the 65-page report to the attorney general's office as per an earlier order of the court.

The CMM, however, refused to disclose the findings, saying that the report was yet to be placed before the HC yet.

In the second week of May last year, a video clip went viral on the social media, showing how the headmaster of Piyar Sattar Latif High School in Narayanganj was humiliated and forced to squat holding his ears in presence of Salim Osman.

Shyamal was also forced to resign based on an unproven allegation that he had hurt religious sentiments of the Muslims.

During the hearing on a suo moto rule, the HC in August last year said the report submitted by police was "incomplete", "inconclusive", "highly deplorable" and "per-functionary" as the investigation officer had failed to identify the perpetrators behind the public humiliation of Shyamal.

The IO made the report without implicating the masterminds in the degrading treatment of the headmaster, it said, adding that there was no logic behind this.

People across the country saw the humiliation of the teacher through the electronic and print media. The judges cannot remain oblivious to such an incident, the HC bench said.

Moklesur Rahman, sub-inspector of Bandar Police Station in Narayanganj, submitted the investigation report to the HC on August 7 last year saying that people connected to the high school, including victim Shyamal, had not brought any allegation against anybody.

No one made any statement against anybody and so, no legal step was taken against anybody, the IO said.

In the report, SI Moklesur quoted Shyamal as saying that his humiliation was an "unexpected situation" caused by a rumour and that both he and MP Salim Osman were victims of the situation.

On May 29 last year, the education ministry submitted a probe report to the HC, saying the school's managing committee had forced Shyamal to resign based on an unproven allegation against him of hurting religious sentiments.

Relevant rules were not followed when the authority suspended him, the ministry said, recommending that he should be reinstated.

Later, Shyamal was reinstated as the headmaster of the school.