

Haluaghat Resident Gets MP To Strong-arm Own Brother's Family into Handing Over Their Inherited Property

News of land extortion, that will not shock anyone in Bangladesh, emerged from a small town called Gazirvita in Halughatthana, Mymensingh today, as a man threatened his own brother's family, in a bid to seize a number of properties that they own in and around Mymensingh.

The perpetrators one Mr Abdul Hamid and Abdul Jalil, went all out in coercing their own brother's family to give up certain pieces of land they own in beltoli, Gazirvita union, Thana Haluaghat and in Haluaghat Mohila college road, Thana Haluaghat.

So far according to our correspondent who went down there as quickly as he could, the men have involved Haluaghatthana's MP Mr Jewel Areng himself. Mr Areng hails from the Awami League of course, who are currently at the helm of the nation, unchallenged.

Mr Hamid and Jalil went so far as to involve other family members of the late Mr Abdur Rashid Sarker, including 3 of his cousins. They include a Mr Babul Hossain, Mr Liakat Ali, and Mr Deluwar Hossain who shockingly is Gazirvita's elected Union President. The whole group in conjunction have been threatening the late Mr Abdur Rashid Sarker's family constantly since his death.

This left the family terrified, according to our correspondent, and as such they have been on the run ever since. According to the locals the late Mr Abdur Rashid Sarker, is comprised of his wife Mrs Sabina Sultana and his sons, one Mr Muhammad Shajibul Sarker and Mr Samiul Alon. Mr Muhammad Shajibul Sarker, our correspondent understands, currently lives in United Kingdom.

The locals unfortunately were unclear as to where the family is now, citing that MP Jewel Areng and Deluwar Hossain both have a notorious reputation when it comes to land extortion. The family understandably, must be overwhelmed by the sheer depth of the influence at play here, with their insecurity is what perhaps has prompted them to disappear and lay low for the time being. With that said we were able to obtain a telephone number for Mr Muhammad Shajibul Sarker in UK, however sadly when we tried the number it appeared to be inactive.

Now land extortion, stories of coercion, violence being used to settle disputes over land is not unheard of. If anything it is part of Bangladesh's overall social structure. However what is embarrassing of course is that how even family members find themselves incapable of exercising any self control when there is the opportunity to prey on the weak and earn a few gains. At that point, blood or relationship mean little and greed takes over. It is a perpetual cycle of slow degrading humanity or humane qualities. The people of Bangladesh continue to succumb to it, showing little inclination to change. That has been the story of our young, flawed nation.

Part of the responsibility falls on the government's shoulder of course to enact social change, by revamping and/or making land ownership laws more transference.

Today in Bangladesh, if you have enough money or influence, combined with immoral government officials no strangers to taking bribes, you can actually register your name in a property lease/ownership document, instead of the rightful owner! This can happen despite the fact that the person you are blatantly stealing it from has owned the property for years or has rightfully inherited it (in the case of the late Mr Abdur Rashid sarker's family)! This can happen even if the victims have documents to demonstrate that they are rightful owners of the land/property being seized/extorted from them!

Nonetheless, that is a topic for another day.

Our correspondent was able to learn that the local police station, unsurprisingly have not launched any enquiries into the incident. Indeed according to the local when the harassment first started, the victim family actually went down to the local police station to lodge a complaint. However they were rebuffed as the local law enforcement authorities were reluctant in taking on the might of both MP Jewel Areng and Union President Deluwar Hossain. Thus the next trip our correspondent made was to Haluaghat local police station in order to glean out whether any official complaints have been made against Mr Abdul Hamid, Abdul Jalil, MP Areng and co. Sadly, the local police station flat out refused entry, hurrying, hassling our correspondent out.

Meanwhile Union President Deluwar Hossain was unavailable for comment. His very irate assistant cited that "Mr Hossain is unwell and resting at home at the moment".