

‘INCITING RAPE’

Youth held over provocative posts on social media

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rab claimed to have arrested a youth from Dhaka’s Khilkhet area on charges of making provocative posts on Facebook against anti-rape protests and inciting rape.

Sheikh Mohd Sharaf Nawar (19) was arrested on Saturday morning, said Mushfiqur Rahman Tushar, a squad commander of Rab-1.

The Rab official said at a time when people are protesting rape and other violence against women and children, some people are trying to create chaos by making provocative posts on social media. The arrestee even uploaded posts inciting rape, they added.

Screenshots of some of the posts went viral, with demand to arrest him. Rab has already identified at least five others who made similar offence, the Rab official said.

A resident of Adabar area, Nawar is apparently a member of a local juvenile gang. He left the area after netizens demanded his arrest, said Rab.

A case was filed with Khilkhet Police Station under Digital Security Act and the accused has been handed over to police.

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PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

COMING BACK TO LIFE ... Slowly but surely, the days of confinement to homes for children are coming to an end. With the normalisation of movement restored, most recreational spots in the capital are welcoming visitors, like the rental paddle-boat service on Dhanmondi Lake. There may be debate whether it’s for better or for worse, but for now, everyone seems happy to be getting some fresh air. The photo was taken last weekend.

‘No prep visible to fight second wave’

GM Quader says about govt plans on Covid-19

UNB, DHAKA

Jatiya Party Chairman GM Quader yesterday said although experts are warning about a surge in Covid-19 infection during the coming winter, government preparations are not in sight to fight it off.

“Experts believe the infection of corona may increase in the coming winter. No one knows how the terrible situation will be controlled. People want to know what steps will be taken by the government or what preparations have so far been taken to tackle the possible resurgence of the virus,” he said.

GM Quader made the remarks while speaking at the organisational meeting of Jatiya Party’s Feni district unit at the party chairman’s Banani office.

The chief of the parliament’s opposition party said, “The government doesn’t have any visible preparation to deal with the corona situation in winter. Confusion is also there in the country about the current corona situation.”

He also said people of the country do not have information and knowledge about whether the infection rate of Covid-19 is growing or declining at the current moment.

The Jatiya Party chairman said government hospitals are not equipped enough to deal with critically-infected Covid-19 patients.

“There’s apparently no corona treatment services at hospitals in remote areas or at the district level. Some private hospitals in the country have advanced treatment facilities, but it’s very expensive. Ordinary people can’t afford to receive treatment at private hospitals.”

He further said many poor people are managing their livelihoods by running battery-run auto-rickshaws and doing small businesses.

“So, don’t make an onslaught on their livelihoods on the pretext of law. People have to be allowed to live during this corona crisis.”

Many child workers moved to riskier jobs in last 3 months: MJF

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Manusher Jonno Foundation yesterday said some 7,800 out of 30,313 child labourers who were involved in risky jobs have switched to “riskier jobs” in eight districts between July and September.

Some 5,600 child labourers migrated in search of job in past three months, and 2,400 have been forced to join new works at nominal wage, MJF said in a statement.

The data was obtained through a survey by 11 MJF partner organisations in a project on risky child labour.

MJF organised a virtual conference on “Covid-19: Present Status and Safety of Working Children”, marking National Child Rights Week. Dr Abul Hossain, joint secretary and project director of Multi-Sectoral Programme on Violence against Women was present as chief guest.

MJF Executive Director Shaheen Anam moderated the conference while Rafeza Shaheen, programme coordinator of MJF, presented the field-level survey data.

In his speech, Abul Hossain emphasised on coordination between government and non-government initiatives.

Shaheen Anam urged the government to take necessary steps against all kinds of torture against children including sexual violence.

Prof Shahana Huda, MJF board member and a teacher of law at Dhaka University, urged authorities to review overall child protection system at government childcare centres.



PHOTO: STAR

It may be a while before fine art exhibits can go back to being what they used to be.

How did the art world adapt to Covid-19?

PRIVANKA CHOWDHURY, Arts & Entertainment Desk

The coronavirus outbreak has brought the activities of art galleries and event spaces to an abrupt halt. Although galleries across the world have quickly turned to digital avenues, the art scene in Bangladesh is only now picking up pace. After nearly six months of inactivity, galleries in the capital are finally coming out of hibernation, with stringent precautions. Aiming to adapt to the new normal, these spaces are getting ready to welcome visitors.

REOPENING, BUT WITH CAUTION

Just last month, Bengal Foundation introduced a den for Bengal Boi at the premises of Bengal Shilpalay. The popular book-spot is set to reopen with an exhibition sometime this month.

“As we’re slowly being reintroduced to the activities of the city, I realized that I kind of enjoyed the silence of the pandemic,” said Jinnatun Jannat, an artist. “Art galleries can offer that much-needed quietness, along with a space for creative reflections.”

Begal Foundation’s Chief Curator Tanzim Wahab believes that effects of the pandemic could be turned around in positive ways. “This crisis has prompted the galleries to try out new methods. It has also made people more conscious and disciplined,” he said.

“The upcoming exhibition by Bengal Foundation will run for three months to ensure that people have ample time to visit the gallery. However, we understand that it may be difficult for many to come to the

event physically. To accommodate them, we plan to have a version of the show available online.”

Lalmatia’s Dwip Gallery is also preparing their schedules and planning to reopen by next month.

ONLINE ONLY, FOR NOW

On the other hand, Goethe-Institut Bangladesh intends to remain closed until further instructions for educational institutions are provided. “We plan to continue with our online programmes,” said Programme Coordinator Mahmud Hassan. Similarly, Alliance Française de Dhaka and EMK Center are also running their online initiatives only.

ISOLATING IN ART SPACE

In July, an experimentation project was initiated by art gallery Kalakendra. For the project, three young artists used Kalakendra’s space at Mohammadpur to make their art, living in the gallery itself to follow social distancing guidelines. The project inquired how isolation impacted their thoughts and productivity. Kalakendra also offered online portfolio review sessions for emerging artists.

Studio 6/6, another gallery located at Mohammadpur’s Tikka Para, recently concluded their debut artist residency project with artist Nabil Rahman. This resulted in their reopening with a physical exhibition, following all health guidelines and an appointment system. An extended version of this exhibition may be announced soon.

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Eunus Ali Akond a habitual contemnor, he should retire: SC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday said Md Eunus Ali Akond, a lawyer, is a habitual contemnor and he should go on retirement.

“Earlier the High Court had initiated contempt of court proceedings for three times against Eunus Ali Akond and fined him on different issues. The High Court, however excused him from the proceedings and therefore, he dared to make comments further tarnishing the judiciary. He is a habitual contemnor. He should now go on retirement,” Chief Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain said.

The chief justice made the comment while presiding over a seven-member bench of the Appellate Division during virtually hearing a content of court rule issued against Akond on September 27 for posting three derogatory comments about the judiciary on his Facebook account.

The apex court fixed today for delivering verdict on the case.

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Language veteran Mirza Mazharul passes away

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Language Movement veteran Prof Dr Mirza Mazharul Islam died at a hospital in Dhaka yesterday morning. He was 96.



Mazharul breathed his last around 9am while undergoing treatment at Birdem General Hospital, our Tangail correspondent reports.

He was awarded with the Ekushey Padak in 2018 for his special contributions to the country’s Language Movement.

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Truck strike ‘postponed’

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Owners and workers of goods-carrying vehicles yesterday “postponed” their countrywide 48-hour strike, supposed to start from today, for 15 days.

Bangladesh Truck-Covered Van Owners and Workers’ Coordination Council took the decision following a meeting with Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal at his secretariat office yesterday.

“We have postponed our strike for 15 days as the home minister has assured us of meeting our demands,” Tajul Islam, member secretary of the platform, told The Daily Star last night.

He said the minister assured them about giving compensation and punishing the BIWTA official, who led the drive against them without notice, following investigation. “Besides, assurances have been given to meet our other demands. So, we have postponed our strike for 15 days,” he added.

State Minister for Shipping Khaled Mahmud Chowdhury, Road Transport and Highway Division Secretary Nazrul Islam, transport leaders Shajahan Khan, Osman Ali, Mashhur Rahman Ranga, Khondaker Enayet Ullah, Rustam Ali Khan, among others, took part in the meeting, Tajul said.

The platform, in a letter sent to different ministries and agencies on September 20, said that they would go for the 48-hour strike on October 12-13 to press home their nine-point demand.

They alleged that Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) on August 26 “vandalised” 17 trucks and drum trucks in Gabtoli Beribadh area and auctioned four trucks with goods without any notice.

Their other demands include compensations to the affected truck owners by BIWTA, punishment of BIWTA officials involved in the drive, installation of truck terminals and resting places for truck drivers at different spots and incorporation of the recommendations of transport owners and workers’ associations in the Road Transport Act 2018.

DETENTION OF 4 CHILDREN IN RAPE CASE Sr judicial magistrate apologises to HC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Barishal Senior Judicial Magistrate Enayet Ullah yesterday offered unconditional apology and expressed grief to the High Court for sending four children, who were arrested in a rape case, to the custody of a child development centre beyond his jurisdiction.

Enayet Ullah appeared before the HC yesterday in line with its orders issued on October 8 night and apologised, saying that his court has no jurisdiction to deal with the case filed against the children, Deputy Attorney General Rawroz MR Chowdhury told The Daily Star.

After accepting the apology, the HC bench of Justice Md Mozibur Rahman Miah and Justice Mohi Uddin Shamim exempted him from personal appearance before this court in this case.

The bench also stayed the proceedings of the rape case till disposal of the suomuto (voluntary) rule issued by this court on October 8, asking the authorities concerned to explain why filing the case against the children and their detention should not be declared illegal.

The HC fixed November 22 for further hearing of the rule, DAG Nawroz said.

Earlier in the day, Abul Kalam, officer-in-charge of Bakerganj Police Station in Barishal, appeared along with the four children and their guardians before the HC bench in line with October 8 directive.

After hearing their statements confidentially, the court also exempted them from personal appearance in the case.

At 9:30pm night on Thursday, the two HC judges operated the bench virtually and directed the Nari o Shishu Nirjaton Daman Tribunal of Barishal to instantly grant bail to four children, who were arrested on October 7 in the case filed on charge of raping a six-year-old in Bakerganj.

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PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

In November 2019, Sylhet City Corporation unveiled the Rabindranath Tagore Monument underneath the Kean Bridge. Alongside the bridge, the monument sits close to other tourist attractions of the city such as Ali Amjad’s Clock Tower, Sarada Hall, and the Circuit House, which makes for a steady inflow of visitors. However, the visitors are treated to an unwelcoming environment, no thanks to some homeless and vagabond people who always hang out around the monument, taking advantage of SCC’s negligence. Visitors have reported being harassed by these men, who also litter the spot and rob it of its beauty. This photo was taken recently.

MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES

Self-awareness can help youth cope with it: speakers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a virtual talk yesterday said self-awareness can be a tool for the youth to deal with their mental health issues.

Marking World Mental Health Day 2020, Bangladesh Youth Leadership Centre (BYLC) organised the programme titled “Know Thyself: Self Awareness and Mental Well-being”, says a press release.

The discussion also focused on how young people can identify their problems and be able to act accordingly.

Besides, speakers discussed the lack of options for affordable mental health support for youth in the South Asian region, and pointed out the social stigma.

They said self-awareness could be effective in places where there is a lack of affordable mental health support for youths.

The discussion was moderated by Adnin Mourin, manager of operations BYLC. Other speakers included Dr Ashique Selim, psychiatrist and managing director of PHWC; Monira Rahman, a human rights activist and country head of Mental Health First Aid Bangladesh; and Rubina Jahan, psychologist and senior manager of the Mental Health Programme at Sajida Foundation.