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## Rapists are beasts: PM

*She says death sentence included in law to protect women from rapists; president issues ordinance on law amendment*

STAR REPORT

Terming rapists "beasts", Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the government has to include the death sentence in the relevant law to save girls from these beasts.

"The rapists are [like] beasts as they exhibit their inhumane nature affecting our girls ... we have amended the law and included capital punishment for rape...we have cleared the amendment [proposal] in the cabinet," she said. The premier was addressing a programme marking the International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction 2020, reports UNB.

The disaster management and relief ministry organised the event at the Osmani Memorial Auditorium. The PM jointed the programme from the Gono Bhaban through a video conference.

Hasina said the government was promulgating the ordinance to make the amendment effective as parliament was not in session. "Our aim is to face any problem whenever it arises and resolve it."

Meanwhile, President Abdul Hamid yesterday issued an ordinance on the amendment to the Nari O Shishu Nirjaton Daman Ain (Women and Children Repression Prevention Act) incorporating the provision for capital punishment for rape.

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A construction worker stands precariously on the edge of the sixth floor roof of a building in the capital's Manda area on Sunday. He unloads concrete mixture from the bucket of a mini crane. Only a few days ago, three workers died after falling from a 10-storey building in the city's Dhanmondi area.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

## MP Nixon flouted code of conduct

*Action as per law, says CEC; Nixon wants action against DC*

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Election Commissioner KM Nurul Huda yesterday said Mujibur Rahman Chowdhury, known as Nixon Chowdhury, lawmaker from Faridpur-4, had violated the electoral code of conduct during the local polls and actions will be taken in this regard as per the election law.

"If necessary, a case will be filed."

While speaking to reporters at the Nirbachan Office, he said, "We have received a complaint [from the cabinet division on taking actions against the violations]. We collected information on this matter immediately and I had a meeting with the election commissioners on the

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POSTS ON GOVT, MILITARY, POLICE

## Govt slaps gag on social media

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The home ministry yesterday issued a statement forbidding people both at home and abroad from spreading "false, fabricated, confusing, and inciting statements" on social media about government, military, police officials and members of different other law enforcement agencies.

"They are presenting false and baseless news about the security forces, which is threatening to ruin the peace in the country, and spreading fear, concern and confusion among the general public," said the statement, signed by Sharif Mahmud Apu, senior information officer at the ministry.

"The government has observed the activities of such people with patience, and has come to the conclusion that it is necessary to take legal action against such people to maintain the stability, domestic security and public well-being," added the statement.

Anyone not heeding the statement will face legal consequences according to the law of the country, the ministry warned.

The statement is the latest among a series of similar statements obstructing freedom of speech, issued by different government agencies since the pandemic struck the country.

On April 16, as the media reported the lack of preparation of the health sector in dealing with the coronavirus-driven crisis, all nurses were banned from speaking to the press. The order came from the Department of Nursing and Midwifery.

On April 23, Health Minister Zahid Maleque ordered all health officials not to talk to the media.

The next day, the public administration ministry asked all secretaries to give necessary instructions to their subordinates so that no public servant talks to or writes

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## Quizzing for the stars



The Daily Star GENIUS powered by Walton Smart Fridge is the country's first online inter-school quiz competition. An initiative of SHOUT -- The Daily Star's weekly youth supplement -- the goal behind this event is to engage school and college students in healthy competition over their knowledge of Bangladesh, the world, and everything else in between. Currently in its second week, the

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IEDCR SURVEY ON COVID-19

## Herd immunity in some city areas?

*Experts think it may be the case but warn against slackening of health rules*

MOUDUD AHMED SUJAN

The epidemiological study, which found 45 percent of the respondents in the capital to be carrying Covid-19 antibody, indicates that residents in some parts of the city may have developed herd immunity, say experts.

Noting that the sample size of the study does not represent the entire population of the city, they say the study reinforces the necessity for maintaining health safety guidelines as it showed the majority of the infected people had no symptoms.

The findings of the study carry a lot of importance and will be helpful in transmission control, treatment of the infected people and also vaccination, a number of experts told The Daily Star in their reactions to the first ever cross-sectional epidemiological survey in the country.

"The sample size is not representational. It can be said, but not surely, that some pockets such as slums may be approaching herd immunity. We need to conduct further study with a representative number of samples to know the reality," noted virologist Prof Nazrul Islam told this newspaper.

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1941-2020

## Rashid Haider passes away

STAR REPORT

Renowned writer Rashid Haider passed away at his residence in the capital's Fuller Road at 8:30am yesterday.

He was 80.

He died of old-age complications.

Rashid Haider was formerly the director of Bangla Academy and executive director of Nazrul Institute. He received the Bangla Academy Award in 1984, and the coveted Ekushey Padak in 2014, among several other accolades, for his contributions with the pen.

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