

## VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

## Death penalty is not the solution

Says Amnesty International

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Amnesty International yesterday criticised the Bangladesh government's decision to introduce death penalty as a punishment for rape, terming it a "regressive step".

In a statement published on its website, the international human rights body's South Asia researcher Sultan Mohammed Zakaria said, "This regressive step is a fig leaf that deflects attention from the lack of real action to address the appalling brutality faced by so many Bangladeshi women."

"Executions perpetuate violence, they don't prevent it. Instead of seeking vengeance, the authorities must focus on ensuring justice for the victims of sexual violence including through delivering the long-term changes that would stop this epidemic of violence and prevent it from recurring," Zakaria added.

Amnesty said perpetrators of rape must be prosecuted and the impunity for these horrific crimes must come to an end, but through fair proceedings and without resorting to death penalty.



**DEFIANT...** Wielding flaming torches and fiery slogans, women of all ages joined the midnight march from Shahbagh to Manik Mia Avenue in the capital.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

## Together they march to break the shackles

Dhaka women take to streets at midnight in protest against rape

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Holding torches and placards, hundreds of women marched in the streets of Dhaka early yesterday, protesting the government's failure to provide security for women and the recent surge in rape.

They also pressed for their 12-point demand, including amendment of the Penal Code by changing the discriminatory definition of rape to make it more inclusive.

The protesters united under the banner "Shekol Bhangar Padajatra" (March to Break the Shackles). The march started from Shahbagh at 11:59pm, participated by women from all walks of life.

The procession reached Manik Mia Avenue around 1:30 pm via Kataban, Science Lab and Rapa Plaza. A good number of men were seen taking part in the procession.

In unison, protesters shouted slogans like "I am a woman, I am innocent", "the real culprit is the rapist" and "rapists roam free while my sister is in the grave".

Faiza Fairuz Rimjhim, a student who took part in the procession, said, "We marched at night to also protest the unwritten ban on girls going out at night."

Protesters demanded security for women, and spoke against the state's failure and patriarchy.

A rally was also held in front of National Parliament, participated by noted photographer Shahidul Alam, activist Rehnuma Ahmed and Dhaka University teacher Samina Luthfa, among others.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

## Integrated approach needed for awareness

Says CJ on human trafficking

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh needs an integrated approach to develop public awareness against trafficking of persons and smuggling of individuals, Chief Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain said yesterday.

"We feel that strong commitment of the government and sensitised judiciary can play a vital role to prevent human trafficking," he said.

He was addressing the closing ceremony of the two-day Bangladesh E-judicial Colloquium, organised virtually.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime's (UNODC) "Global Action against Trafficking in Persons and the Smuggling of Migrants- Bangladesh" (GLO.ACT-Bangladesh) Project organised the colloquium.

Addressing the event as chief guest, the chief justice said human trafficking has become an acute threat in Bangladesh in recent decades.

A large number of women and children are displaced from the offense and trafficked in different parts of the

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

## GRAFT CASE AGAINST BABAR

## Finish trial in 30 days: HC to court

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed the lower court concerned to finish the trial proceedings of a corruption case against former BNP state minister Lutfozzaman Babar in 30 days.

The HC also summarily rejected a petition filed by Babar seeking transfer of the court where the corruption case against him is pending.

The HC bench of Justice Md Nazrul Islam Talukder and Justice Ahmed Sohel came up with the order after holding hearing on the petition. The HC asked the Special Judge's Court-7 of Dhaka to finish the trial proceedings against Babar in 30 days after receiving its order, Deputy Attorney General AKM Amin Uddin Manik told The Daily Star.

He said Babar, now in jail, recently

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

## SAGAR-RUNI MURDER

## Rab fails 74th deadline to submit probe report

Court directs to turn it in by Nov 22

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday again asked Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) to submit the probe report of a case filed over murder of journalist couple Sagar Sarowar and Meherun Runi by November 22.

With yesterday's date, the investigation officer has so far taken 75 dates to complete investigation.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Rajesh Chowdhury passed the order after Rab Additional Superintendent Khondoker Shafiqul Alam, also investigation officer of the case, failed to submit the report yet again yesterday.

Earlier on November 11 last year, the High Court expressed disappointment at the lack of significant progress in investigation.

Sagar, news editor at private TV channel Maasranga, and his wife Runi, a senior reporter at ATN Bangla, were killed in the early hours of February 11, 2012 in their rented flat at the capital's West Razabazar.

After Sher-e-Bangla Nagar police and the Detective Branch of police, Rab was tasked with the probe on April 18, 2012.

## '1 lakh litre milk wasted per year'

Speakers say, urging efforts to grow the industry

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

To ensure proper nutrition for all and protect cattle farmers, speakers have called for coordinated efforts to grow a robust milk industry in the country.

Pointing out that nearly one lakh litres of milk is wasted per year, they said marketing milk using ultra-high temperature (UHT) technology can prevent wastage and help more people get proper nutrients.

Addressing a webinar, they also urged the government to provide loans at simple terms and conditions to make UHT technology popular.

On the eve of World Food Day, The Daily Star yesterday organised the webinar titled "Bridging food system gaps and ensuring access to safe milk in Bangladesh: The role of UHT technology".

Head of Public Relations at Nagad Zahidul Islam moderated the programme.

UHT milk processing technology and Tetra Pak's six-layer aseptic packaging can ensure food safety, hygiene, and preservation for up to six months without refrigeration and preservatives.

Syed Muntasir Redwan -- national coordinator of SUN Business Network, a leading private sector initiative to improve nutrition in emerging markets -- said, "In want of proper preservation knowledge and capacity, about one lakh litres of milk is wasted annually."

"As per WHO recommendations, a person needs to consume 250ml of milk each day to meet nutrition demands," Muntasir added.

"In reality, per capita milk consumption is around 50ml daily," he said.

Eleash Mridha, managing director at PRAN Group, said a huge amount of powdered milk is imported, whereas a good amount of milk is wasted every day due to lack of proper distribution channels.

Underscoring the need to adopt UHT for massive production, he said if the government patronises industrialists, huge amounts of currency will be saved.



**Standing amid a chaotic crowd, a man lifts the glistening fish up to chest-height, almost as if to show off his score. The photo was taken late on Tuesday night from Port Road wholesale market.**

PHOTO: TITU DAS

## Midnight madness for hilsa in Barishal

Buyers overflow wholesale market before 22-day selling ban hits

SUSHANTA GHOSH

Some with bags in hand, others hands bare -- Barishal city dwellers were rushing to Port Road hilsa wholesale market on Tuesday midnight.

But why? Turns out it's the anticipation of a price fall surrounding the coming 22-day ban on selling the famed fish that kept the city awake at night.

Inside the market, there was barely any space to move about. Since Tuesday night, hundreds have been rushing in, completely flouting social distancing guidelines.

The 22-day ban started at midnight yesterday. Out of market for this period, anglers and sellers were anxious to sell off their stock. Trawlers after trawlers have been coming to the port for the last few days from Mehendiganj, Muladi, and Bhola, said wholesaler Ajit Kumar Das Manu.

And the customers are lapping it up. Someone was seen buying a pair of large-sized hilsa, while another got a haali (two pairs). Some of the wealthier could be seen bagging 10 or even a dozen of the fish.

For example, one Rekha Sultana said she wanted to stock at least 10 hilsa for her family for the ban.

This mass buying, however, has had a counter-intuitive effect on the price of the fish -- with so many willing buyers,

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

## HC directs to stop fake arrest warrants

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday issued several directives on the authorities concerned to stop fake arrest warrants.

In response to a writ petition, the HC directed that the names, designations and official phone numbers of judges or magistrates, who will issue the warrants, must be mentioned in the order.

The names, designations, numbers of mobile phones and signatures of the court staff who will prepare the arrest warrant will have to be used also so that the accused against whom the warrant have been issued can communicate with the court staff concerned about its authenticity, the HC said.

It said the police officers responsible for executing the warrants, will also communicate with the court staff preparing the warrants over their cellphones.

In the verdict, the HC ordered that police officers will produce the accused

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

## CTG POLICE BOX BLAST

## Six more 'Neo-JMB operatives' arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, CTG

The Counter Terrorism Unit of Chattogram Metropolitan Police has arrested six suspected 'Neo-JMB' operatives over the bomb blast at a traffic police box which left five men including two cops injured in Sholoshahar Gate-2 area on February 28 this year.

The arrestees are Mohidul Islam (24), Jahir Uddin (28), Moinuddin (20), Abu Sadek (19), Rahmat Ullah Akib (24) and Alauddin (23), said CTU sources.

Mohidul and Jahir were arrested at Kolabazar in Bandarban on Tuesday and the rest four from Lohagara, Chattogram on early Wednesday.

With this, a total of 10 alleged 'Neo-JMB' men were arrested in this connection.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Asif Mohiuddin of the CTU told The Daily Star, "They are active operatives of Neo-JMB and they told the police that they are working to establish Sharia law in the country."

"Police got their link during the investigation and later traced them in Bandarban and Lohagara upazilas," he said.

The police official said they used to upload bomb-making videos on different apps.

A CTU official said Abu Sadek who studied in a madrasa left improvised explosive device (IED) inside a carton at the traffic police box which was blasted through a remote control device later. "Afterwards, he fled to Dhaka and returned to Lohagara a few days later," he said.

ADC Asif said police are verifying their information and tried to trace out the other militants

Sgt Arafat, Assistant Sub-Inspector Atauddin and three pedestrians were injured when the bomb went off in the port city's Sholoshahar on the night of February 28. According to SITE Intelligence Group, IS claimed the responsibility of the police box attack similar to Dhaka and Khulna. However, police ruled out the IS link.

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