

# Women feel insecure under police custody

Reveals DMA survey

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A survey conducted by Data Management Aid (DMA) of Police Reform Programme (PRP) yesterday revealed that none of the women feels secure under the custody of general police stations, while 59 percent women feel secured under the custody of model police stations.

DMA disclosed this at a findings dissemination session of Public Attitude Follow-up Survey held at a city hotel where it also mentioned that overall 70 percent women have positive experiences in model police stations, while only 14 percent in normal

police stations.

The government is implementing the PRP since 2005 in partnership with UNDP, DFID and EC. At present, there are 11 model police stations, while six others are in the pipeline to be set up.

DMA conducted the survey in 2008 to document the pre-intervention situation of the public perception towards the police service.

Speaking as the guest of honour, former adviser SM Shahjahan, who is also a former IGP, said, "Poor people always want justice from police, while the rich and powerful want favour. Sometimes it is true that

police go against the poor and in favour of the powerful people."

Home Secretary Abdus Sobhan Sikder said the government is considering the police reform proposal keenly and it would be passed on time.

Inspector General of Police (IGP) Nur Mohammad said police are component of the government and the force depends on its attitude.

At the end of the seminar, he told journalists that police want an atmosphere to conduct investigations as well as enquiries independently and to be free from any interference.

Additional IGP (admin)

NBK Tripura, who is the national project director of PRP, said police reform in Bangladesh is now very much in the public eye and a focus for the media, as every citizen of the country started to enjoy the benefits of the programme.

The activities carried out by PRP include Evidence Act amendment, submission of the Evidence Ordinance 2007, development in Strategic Plan (2008-10) for Bangladesh Police, review of Bangladesh Police Crime Prevention Strategy (CPS), development of Community Policing Strategy, adaptation of Gender Guidelines and introduction of Police Open Day, headed by



Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon and Nirbhik jointly form a human chain at Fatullah Bazar ferry ghat in Narayanganj yesterday with a call to save Buriganga and Shitalakha rivers.



Nagorik Adhikar Sangrakkhan Forum forms a human chain at Shahbagh in the city yesterday with a call to keep price of essentials within buying capacity of people during Ramadan.

## Bandarban Chamber of Commerce executives

UNB, Bandarban

Bandarban Zila Parishad Chairman Koshaiha was elected chairman of the Bandarban Chamber of Commerce and Industries on Thursday.

Noted businessmen Shafiqur Rahman and Laxmipada Das were elected vice-presidents. Besides, 15 directors of the executive body were elected.

The election was held at the conference room of the Deputy Commissioner where some 169 members of the chamber cast their votes.

Executive Magistrate Fizzur Rahman acted as the chief election commissioner.

## 7 DU students still face army car torching case

University Black Day tomorrow

RAKIB AHAMMED

Seven students of Dhaka University (DU) are still facing a case filed in connection with the three-day (August 20-23) campus unrest in 2007 although five other cases related to this incident were either withdrawn or disposed of.

The seven students, charged with army car torching case at Shahbagh intersection on August 23, have to appear before the court as per its order hampering their academic life.

"We are passing our days in great uncertainty. All the cases filed against us have been withdrawn, but this one has been continuing even after two years of the incident," said Deen Islam Angel, an accused student.

On August 20, students resorted to demonstration after some army personnel beat up a student during a football match on DU central

playground. It continued for three days and triggered nationwide protests.

Six cases were filed with several police stations around the DU campus in connection with the unrest accusing several thousand unidentified students.

Of the six cases, three were withdrawn, two disposed of, and one still remains under trial.

The army car torching case was filed against 25 people but 18 of them were dropped from the charge sheet.

Meanwhile, teachers, students and the administration have chalked out a series of programmes to observe 'University Black Day' tomorrow protesting law enforcement agencies' torture on thousands of students and teachers during and after the violence.

Different student organisations will also hold protest programmes on the campus demanding withdrawal of the

army car torching case against the seven students.

They are Deen Islam Angel, a student of mass communication and journalism, Deen Islam Biplob who finished his MBA recently, Asaduzzaman Asad of mathematics, Rafiqul Islam Sujon of Islamic studies, Rashedul Habib of Sanskrit and Abul Hasan of Arabic.

In connection with the violence, four teachers and eight students were arrested and they were behind the bars for about five months.

Later they were released in the wake of silent and peaceful student movement.

Meanwhile, the parliamentary standing committee on education ministry has recommended to the authorities concerned to reinvestigate the unrest and torture on teachers and students.

The committee also condemned the torture on teachers and students.

## Two bodies recovered as trawler capsizes at Mithamoin

A CORRESPONDENT, Kishoreganj

Two bodies were recovered yesterday, some 25 hours after a trawler capsized in a water body at Mithamoin upazila on Thursday afternoon.

The victims were identified as sub-assistant agriculture officer of Mithamoin Md Nurul Islam, 35, of Gouripur in Mymensingh, and Rashed Fakir, 62, of the same area.

The two others -- Manager of Grameen Shakti Taher Uddin Jewel, 35, of Tangail, UP Member of Mithamoin Pratap Chandra Das -- still remain missing.

Mithamoin UNO Gopal Chandra Das said the trawler, which was going from Gupdighi to Mithamoin Sadar with 10 passengers, capsized around 5:00pm by a storm in Dupi.

Divers recovered the bodies of six people the same day.

## Valuables worth Tk five lakh looted in Natore

A CORRESPONDENT, Natore

Robbers looted valuables worth around Tk five lakh from five houses of a family at Magura village under Singra upazila in Natore on Thursday night.

Police said a gang of 20 to 25 robbers entered the house of Sahadev Chandra by breaking open the door and looted cash, jewellery and other valuables.

Later, they also stormed the house of Gaur Chandra, Madhu Sudan, Supen, Nipen and looted cash, jewellery and valuables from their houses one after another.

At one stage, villagers came to the spots, but the robbers managed to flee the scene by a boat.

## Virtual office can help reduce high rent of office space, traffic jam

UNB, Dhaka

The use of web and advanced phone services have already transformed the way businesses are done in the country and now it is time for companies to increasingly use the internet as a virtual office, improving their productivity at all levels.

"With a virtual office, first of all, you'll be able to get rid of the high cost of your rental space and use your home as your office," said former secretary Muhammad Fazlur Rahman.

"Many senior executives of multinational companies nowadays do not attend their offices in person. They do their jobs sitting at home when many others spend too much of time in traffic, driving to and from office everyday," he added.

With fuel prices on the rise, a virtual office can help a company save a lot of money it spends every month on transportation of its staff. "Besides," according to experts, "the virtual office will allow its staff to avoid the everyday traffic jam on the city streets. Those who are tired of spending hours together in traffic jam everyday would like to join such offices."

Describing the further benefits of virtual office,

Barrister Ahsan Habib said, "You've found, for example, an expert you want to hire for your office, but he lives in the UK and you're in Dhaka. With a virtual office, you can make such a remote player part of your team. Internet can make it easier. You need his service, not his physical presence."

Barrister Habib, who lives in the UK and had been in Dhaka recently, said, "A newspaper reporter was my neighbor in East London. I have never seen him going to the office. One day I asked him, how come a journalist never goes to the office! Then he said, 'we don't need to go to office as we work online. My boss assigns through online and I file my stories the same way, that's it.'"

"Working at home is gradually becoming a normal phenomenon, especially in the United States and Europe. This new trend has been coined 'telework', or working at a place away from one's traditional workplace, but maintaining constant contact with it through the use of modern information, hi-tech and telecommunication gadgets," writes a writer in a Russian journal.

He says the number of 'teleworkers' is growing at about 20-30 percent globally every year. For instance, he

says, the number of 'teleworkers' in Finland is about one-third of the number of the nation's able-bodied, employable population.

In 2007, the Confederation of Netherlands Industry and Employers wrote a letter to their government to reward "home workers" with anti-traffic jam bonus. The organisation actually wanted "home workers" to be compensated for the costs of home-working such as light, energy and the cost of setting up an office at their homes. This, the Confederation says, will reduce traffic congestion and promote economic growth.

Telework in Bangladesh can bring about a big change. The companies here, especially those with limited financial resources to foot the ever-increasing office rents in major cities, can ask their expert employees, whose physical presence does not matter, to work from home.

The virtual office system has already arrived in Bangladesh in one way or the other. There are many small businesspeople in the country carrying out their business through online. Take the example of SM Farhad Ullah, a supplier of garment accessories in the port city of Chittagong. Farhad Ullah does his business with the help of his assistants without having any office. "This is my startup venture... I've got a fax machine, one laptop and a number of telephones at my home. I'm doing fine. Technology has made things easier. We need to take advantage of that," he said.

For an effective virtual office, according to experts, one only needs to provide genuine professionals reliable infrastructure, an effective network access, a professional phone system, technical support and a well-thought out action plan.

When there are benefits of virtual office, there are drawbacks as well. "With the popularisation of virtual office, many unskilled and semi-skilled people may lose their jobs. Besides, the 'teleworkers' or 'home workers' may feel bored working at home all day long. And most importantly, lack of face to face communication may result in misunderstandings and confusion with the management," said Barrister Habib.

"Anyway," he said, "the benefits of virtual office are much more than its drawbacks and we need to popularise it as it'll help manage time and space very effectively."

## Essay contest on poverty alleviation

DU CORRESPONDENT

Better Bangladesh Foundation (BBF) is going to organise an essay competition for students and researchers to mark the 'World Poverty Alleviation Day' on October 17.

The theme of the essay is 'Poverty alleviation through education in building Bangabandhu's Sonar Bangla', says a press release.

The interested persons have been requested to send their essays by September to Masud AKhan, Chairman of BBF, Road-10, House-25, Block-E, Banani, Dhaka-1213. Phone: 017165000230. E-mail: info@dhakalanguageclub.com.

## MADARIPUR TRAWLER CAPSIZE 2 bodies recovered, 6 still missing

UNB, Madaripur

The bodies of two children, who went missing along with six others following an engine boat capsized in the river Arial Khan in Shibchar on Wednesday night, were recovered yesterday.

The two are Sumona, 8, daughter of Hannan Matbar, and her cousin Hasan, 8, son of Mannan Matbar, of Khatakhandi.

Local people found the bodies floating in the river at about 1:00pm.

Six others, including four children, a youth and a

woman, still remain missing, family sources said.

On Thursday, divers rushed to the spot from Dhaka and carried out a rescue operation but did not find any body on the spot.

The police said the trawler with 50 people of a bridal party, including the bridegroom and bride, sank in the river on Wednesday night after a collision with another sand-laden trawler while returning to Kharakandi in Shibchar from Charmanai in Faridpur.

Forty-two people, including the bridegroom and bride, managed to swim ashore.

## New vested property act by Dec: Hira

BSS, Dhaka

The government will enact a new law by December next to remove the stalemate in the management of vested property across the country.

Land Minister Rezaul Karim Hira, MP, said this while inaugurating a two-day training course for newly recruited assistant commissioners (land) in Blam auditorium here yesterday.

A new law in this regard has become necessary, as the earlier one, framed in 2001, has now turned ineffectual, he said.

Establishment Secretary Iqbal Mahmud attended the function as the special guest while Dhaka Divisional Commissioner Dr Khandakar Showkat Hossain was in the chair.

Hira said the list of assistant commissioners (land) has been prepared on the basis of their merit, and their postings were also given accordingly.

## BTCL FREE PACKAGE 50,000 clients get new connection

BSS, Dhaka

Bangladesh Telecommunication Company Limited (BTCL) has given connection to 50,000 clients across the country in the last one and half months.

Post and Telecommunication Minister Razi Uddin Razu told BSS that demand for BTCL land phone has been increased after announcement of free package for clients at district and upazila levels.

"Clients are coming to take recommendation everyday for land phone," he said adding about one lakh applications were submitted across the country for the BTCL phone which are now under process.

Since July 1 this year the BTCL started giving free connection of land phone at district and upazila levels for three months on first come first serve basis.

Earlier, the whole country

was brought under a same zone fixing the call rate at 30 paisa per minute.

Sources in the telecommunication ministry said, cable lines are being installed in the upazilas where the work is progressing slowly due to shortage of cable lines.

Some divisional engineers said the process is somehow being slowed, as they are not getting required quality of cable from cable industry in Khulna.

However, Managing Director of the BTCL SM Khabiruzzaman said there is no scarcity of cable.

He said, the people once had returned their telephones, but now they are out to get connection from BTCL as its services and rates both turned attractive for them.

He said the divisional engineers were asked to arrange cable line in every upazila and giving line to waiting clients as soon as possible.

## Cumin seeds, milk powder worth Tk 7 lakh seized

UNB, Noakhali

The police seized a microbus and recovered a huge quantity of Indian cumin seeds and milk powder in Bogxanj crossing area of Senbag upazila on Thursday night.

Officer-in-charge of Senbag Police Station Mohammad Alamgir said a patrol team of police searched the Choumuhani-bound micro bus in the area at night and recovered five sacks of cumin seeds and 35 sacks of milk powder.

However, the driver and the smuggler managed to escape.

The police official said the contraband items smuggled from India through Choudagram frontier were being taken to Choumuhani Bazar.