

Domestic help found dead in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police recovered the burnt body of a teenage domestic help from an apartment at Uttara in the city yesterday.

The victim was identified as Rehana Akhter, 16, daughter of Abdul Barek of Devidwar in Comilla.

Around 8:00am, police broke opened the door to the servant's bathroom of an apartment at road-12, sector-13 in Uttara and found the charred body lying inside, said Sub-Inspector (SI) Abdul Qayum of Uttara Police Station.

The apartment belongs to Chowdhury Hasan Tareq, a senior official of a private company.

Some kerosene in a plastic container, a match box and match stocks were also found beside the body, the SI added.

Police sent the body to Dhaka Medical College Hospital for autopsy.

Quoting the house inmates, police said Rehana was working as a domestic help in the house for past one year. Her sick father and stepmother lived in the village home where she did not visit much, they added.

Around 11:30pm on Tuesday, she went to sleep along with another of their domestic help Sanji, 10, quoted police.

The following morning, the house mistress Nargis Fatema as well as Sanji could not find Rehana and, on searching the house, found the servant's bathroom closed from inside, police added.

Nargis informed the police who came to the spot and recovered the body.

Neighbouring sources said the girl had an affair with the security guard of a nearby house and the guard got sacked when their affair was disclosed some two months back.

Police could not ascertain the cause of the death.

A case of unnatural death was filed with Uttara Police Station in this regard.



Cars parked in front of Janata Bank head office at Motijheel in the city yesterday despite a Dhaka Metropolitan Police traffic sign asking to use the space as a bus stop.

High govt official succumbs to his burns

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A government high official, who was injured in a gas explosion in the city's Mirpur on May 27, succumbed to his burns yesterday.

Md Atiqullah, 38, deputy general manager of Bangladesh Sugar and Food Industries Corporation, died at a private hospital in the city.

He was earlier admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) with 30 percent of his body burnt.

Atiqullah along with six others suffered burn injuries in an explosion, thought to have occurred due to gas leakage, on the first floor of a four-storey building in Mirpur-2.

Of the six injured, four were released after given primary treatment and two others are still admitted to DMCH burn unit with 30 percent injury.

Krishibid Institution Bangladesh in a press release condoled the death of Atiqullah who was a member to the organisation.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

\$1.8b UN support to achieve MDGs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The United Nations is going to provide a grant of \$1.8 billion in next five years to help Bangladesh achieve Millennium Development Goals by focusing on seven development challenges.

An agreement was signed between the government and a UN country team in this regard at the conference room of the finance ministry at the Secretariat yesterday.

The grant will be provided under the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2012-2016.

Under the programme 22

Resident and non-Resident UN agencies will provide technical and financial support for the seven areas, each led by one UN agency, as outlined in the UNDAF.

The areas are: Democratic Governance and Human Rights; Pro-poor Growth with Equity; Social Services for Human Development; Food Security and Nutrition; Climate Change, Environment, Disaster Risk Reduction and Response; Pro-poor Urban Development; Gender Equity and Women's Advancement.

Economic Relations Division Secretary Musharraf Hossain Bhuiyan, UN Resident Coordinator of Bangladesh Neal Walker signed

the agreement in presence of Finance Minister AMA Muhith.

Speaking at the signing ceremony, Muhith said of the seven pillars mentioned in the UNDAF 2012-2016, food security and nutrition are the most important problem at this moment.

Two of them--democratic governance and pro-poor growth--are also important, he said.

The finance minister hoped that the coordination among the development partners would be much more effective towards implementing the programme.

Neal Walker mentioned that the UNDAF was elaborated on the basis of rigorous analysis of the

challenges facing the country and in close collaboration with government partners.

It defines the areas where UN grant assistance will be able to support the achievement of concrete results for the most vulnerable citizens of the country, he said.

The executive summary of the programme document said, the specific targeting of 30 cities or towns, where three million of the poorest people live, is a strategy for reducing poverty and ensuring more equitable access by the urban poor to skills, income, resources, financial and social services, and social protection.

Campaign for speedy war crimes trial starts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Samprodaikata-Jangibad Birodhi Mancha yesterday launched mass campaigns to create public opinion for accelerating the process of war crimes trial.

The anti-militancy and anti-communalism platform leaders announced the programmes to a press conference at Liberation War Museum in the city yesterday.

The programmes will continue till August 15, the day Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was killed in 1975, said the organisers.

Dr Noor Mohammad, member secretary of the Mancha, said, "We will send one lakh post cards in two phases. We will collect Tk 2 from all who sign on the post cards to collect fund."

The signature collection campaign will held in Mirpur in the city tomorrow, in Barisal on June 11, in Sylhet on June 17, in Chittagong on June 18, in Rajshahi and Khulna on June 25 and in Rangpur on June 26.



Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia distributes food among destitute people in the city's Kakrail area marking BNP founder and former president Ziaur Rahman's 30th death anniversary.

PHOTO: BNP

JS body okays draft law to protect whistleblowers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A parliamentary body yesterday recommended that the House enact a law to protect whistleblowers and encourage them to disclose information.

The parliamentary standing committee on law, justice and parliamentary affairs ministry placed in parliament a scrutiny report of a bill and made the recommendation.

Law Minister Shafique Ahmed on September 23 last year submitted the bill titled "Public interest-related information disclosure (protection) act". Suranjit Sengupta, chief of the parliamentary body, in a brief statement tagged with the committee's report said, "If the bill is passed, a social movement against corruption will be built and all will come forward without fear to disclose information".

The bill encourages a whistleblower to give the authorities concerned information about activities against public health, security and environment, and criminal activities including embezzlement of public money and properties, misuse of power and irregularities

The parliamentary standing committee recommends change in Bangladesh Legal Practitioners and Bar Council Order 1972

in any organisation.

The proposed legislation says the authorities may reward or honour a whistleblower if his information is proved correct in the court.

It also says no criminal or civil or departmental proceedings can be initiated against a person for disclosing public-interest related information to the authorities, and his or her identity will not be disclosed without his or her consent.

The parliamentary standing committee yesterday also recommended that the House pass another bill seeking amendment to Bangladesh Legal Practitioners and Bar Council Order 1972.

Spotted deer dies at zoo

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

A spotted deer at Rangpur Zoo died yesterday around 10:00am when the zoo employees gave chase to catch it.

The zoo sources said Mosharaff Hossain of Mohammadpur upazila in Magura district came to buy two deer from Rangpur zoo at Tk 30,000. When the employees ran to catch the second one, it collapsed and died.

Deputy Curator of Rangpur Zoo Abul Kashem said a three-member probe committee headed by Livestock Officer Meer Faruque of Rangpur sadar upazila was formed to investigate the cause of death.

Abul said every year the zoo authorities sell at least 10 deer on an average.

\$359m WB credit for health sector

UNB, Dhaka

World Bank (WB) approved a US\$ 359 million credit for Bangladesh to support the government efforts to improve health services, especially for women, children, the poor and the marginalised.

The credit approved on May 26 will be spent under Health Sector Development Programme (HSDP), which is a follow-up of WB support for the government's sector-wise programmes in the health sector.

The credit, from International Development Association, WB's concessionary lending arm, carries a 0.75 percent service charge, with maturity of 40 years including a 10-year grace period.

The government implemented two sector-wise programmes -- Health and Population Sector Programme (HPSP) from 1998 to 2005 and Health, Nutrition and Population Sector Programme (HNPPSP) from 2005 to 2011.

WB contributed US\$ 300 million to HNPSP and helped mobilise US\$ 1.2 billion in donor assistance.

Since 1990, infant and child mortality rates declined by more than two-thirds, earning Bangladesh a United Nations Millennium Development Goal (MDG) Award in 2010. Similarly, an impressive decline was achieved in maternal mortality ratio, from 320 per 100,000 live births in 2001 to 194 in 2010.

Based on these and in recognition of the challenges ahead, the government planned to implement a new US\$ eight billion Health, Population and Nutrition Sector Development Programme from 2011 to 2016.

The newly approved HSDP of WB is fully aligned with this programme and will play an important role in operationalising commitments to improve essential health services and strengthen the systems.

"This operation adheres to best-practice for aid effectiveness, support-

ing a country-led, sector-based programme instead of a stand-alone project," said Ellen Goldstein, WB country director for Bangladesh.

"The programme aligns multiple development partners to the country's priorities in health, nutrition and population, and uses country systems for implementation and monitoring rather than fragmented donor procedures.

"It is the kind of innovation in aid management that we wish to pursue in other sectors," she added.

Significant development challenges still remain in the health sector, including a double burden of non-communicable and communicable diseases.

The percentage and number of malnourished women and children in Bangladesh remains among the highest in the world. Fertility rate needs to be reduced further in order to avoid a doubling of the population in the next 40 to 50 years.



The carcass of a spotted deer at Rangpur Zoo, which died yesterday when zoo employees gave chase.

PHOTO: STAR