

TORTURE ON RAKIB
Suspend five policemen
Demand 7 eminent citizens

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Seven eminent citizens of the country yesterday demanded suspension of five policemen for their involvement in torturing Rakib Hossain, a grandson of the country's first premier Tajuddin Ahmed.

Two police officials tortured Rakib when he along with a friend parked his car in front of a roadside restaurant in the capital's Gulshan area on February 10 while three others misbehaved with him at Gulshan Police Station.

In a joint statement, signed by Khushi Kabir, they also demanded the government to take punitive actions against five policemen on the basis of the findings of an independent and impartial probe body.

The six other signatories are advocate Sultana Kamal, Dr Iftekharuzzaman, Meghna Guha Thakurata, barrister Sara Hossain, Dr Hamida Hossain, and Dr Shamsul Barai.

They demanded the police seek apology admitting their fault, and give assurance of not committing such offences in future.

The eminent citizens, however, welcomed a High Court (HC) order for summoning the policemen and directing the government of taking institutional actions against them.

They also expressed concern over the harassment by the police and the lack of security of common people.

The HC on February 12 summoned the five police officials to appear before it on Thursday to explain their alleged involvement in the torture on Rakib.

The court kept the police officials standing before it for around four and half hours on Thursday.



Artists perform at the Reunion 2012 of Jagannath Hall Alumni Association at Teacher-Student Centre of Dhaka University yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Boi Mela: Opportunity to save a life

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

It was a short, sharp prick, relatively pain free. A short conversation followed and the procedure was over.

This is the way how a restorative fruit juice sipping visitor at Amar Ekushey Boi Mela, Bikarun Nessa Tanzu, described the way she donated blood before the Bangla Academy premises yesterday.

An honours student of Bangladeshi Islamic University, Tanzu said, "I feel as if I did something today, something for mankind. I feel excited."

Five voluntary blood donation camps were set up at the premises. They belonged to Transfusion Department of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University, Police Blood Bank of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, Red Crescent

Blood Centre, Dhaka Medical Unit of Dhaka South and Quantum Foundation.

"I wanted to donate blood but did not get a chance. I could not miss the opportunity when I came visiting the Boi Mela this time," added Tanzu, hoping that her blood would be able to save a life.

A first timer, both at the fair and at blood donation, Mohammad Sukkur, was there too. The Keraniganj businessman said, "This donation will do me no harm but surely come to the aid of someone who needs it."

Sheikh Mohammad Faisal, coordinator of Blood Programme of Quantum Foundation, said with 1,200 bags of blood collected since the fair's inauguration, the response was good.

Donors get a "donor card" allowing him or her to get free blood when

they themselves need it. They also get a free blood screening on HIV, Hepatitis B and C, malaria and syphilis, he added.

Assistant Sub Inspector of Police Siddiqui Islam, tending to donors at Police Blood Bank, said people, irrespective of age, do come forward when they realise the necessity and shortage of blood.

He smiles and mentions 19 teenagers from Cambrian College who came to donate blood and kept on cracking jokes on the snacks that should be offered after the donation.

Yesterday the fair was jam-packed with scores of visitors taking advantage of the day being Friday, a weekend.

Thousands waited patiently in long queues before the gates opened in the morning. In the afternoon, the queues reached up to the fine arts

faculty at one end and Doel Chattar on the other.

The premises were also exclusively reserved for children from 11:00am to 3:00pm, termed Shishu Prohor (children's hour) by the academy authority to encourage guardians into acquainting budding minds with books and the habit of reading. The first Shishu Prohor was held on Friday.

Youngsters arrived with their guardians and were seen enjoying the atmosphere, going through the books available and trying to decide on which one they wanted.

Booksellers too spent a busy day struggling to cope with the large number of customers.

A total 219 new books hit the fair while a discussion, cultural programme and singing competition were also held yesterday.

'Use of jute low despite law'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Although a 2010 law makes mandatory the use of jute in packaging food and agricultural products, only five percent of total production of jute is being used for this purpose, speakers said at a press conference yesterday.

At the time of the law's enactment, the government had said that if the law was implemented, around 60 percent jute of the country would be used, they said. But the government could not enforce the act till date, they added.

The speakers urged the government to take necessary steps to enforce the Mandatory Jute Packaging Act 2010 to bring back the glorious past of jute through quitting the use of non-degradable elements like plastic and polythene packets, which are harmful for the environment.

They demanded strict enforcement of the law to help flourish jute cultivation, preservation, and trading, as livelihood of about three crore people is directly and indirectly linked with it. If the law is enforced, it would also save the environment from the harms of polythene and plastic packets, they said.

Nagorik Songhoti, a social organisation, and Campaign for Sustainable Rural Livelihoods (CSRL), an alliance of 250 non-government organisations, jointly organised the press conference at Dhaka Reporters Unity (DRU) yesterday.

General secretary of Nagorik Songhoti Sarifuzzaman Sarif read out a written statement while coordinator of Sramik Karmachari Oikya Parishad Dr Wajedul Islam Khan addressed the programme, among others.



A man donates blood at a voluntary blood donation camp set up by Transfusion Department of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University before Bangla Academy premises yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

PM wants next generation to excel in sports, education

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday expressed her strong resolve to build the future generations in the country best in knowledge, science, and sports.

"We want to make our children good citizens so that they don't go astray, and stay away from drugs and other mischiefs," she said while addressing a certificate distribution function at Shaheed Suhrawardy National Indoor Stadium in the city's Mirpur in the afternoon.

The Prime Minister distributed certificates among some of the volunteers of different schools and colleges who took part at the colourful physical display in the inaugural ceremony of the ICC Cricket World Cup 2011 held at Bangabandhu National Stadium in the city on February 17 last year.

Finance Minister AMA Muhith, State Minister for Youth and Sports Ahad Ali Sarker and Army Chief General Abdul Mubeen also spoke on the occasion.

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) President AHM Mustafa Kamal gave the vote of thanks while BCB Director Dewan Shaiful Arefin Tutul delivered the welcome speech.

A documentary titled 'Beautiful Bangladesh', made on the eve of the ICC Cricket World Cup 2011, was shown at the function while noted singers Ibrar Tipu, Balam, Arnab, Elita and Kona sang the inaugural song of the last cricket world cup.

Terming the Awami League government as sports-friendly, Sheikh Hasina

said her government always works for the development of the country's

sports. "We've extended all kinds of support including building necessary sports infrastructures," she added.

She said sports expedites flourishing of culture and also reduces criminal tendency.

The premier hoped that the next generation of the country will build themselves as 'sonar manush' to materialise the dream of the father of the nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

She said that in her previous term, Bangladesh got widespread recognition in international cricket arena as the country had qualified for playing the ICC World Cup through winning the ICC trophy beating Kenya in 1997.

In this regard, she mentioned that Bangladesh also got the ODI status during the tenure of the Awami League government and secured her position in the world of cricket as the 10th test playing nation.

Hasina said apart from the male cricketers, the female cricketers of the country are also improving day by day as the Bangladesh women's cricket team has recently got the one-day status.

Mentioning that the ICC World T20 Tournament will be held in the country in 2014, she said all the necessary preparations will be taken from now onwards to make the tournament a world class one and colourful.

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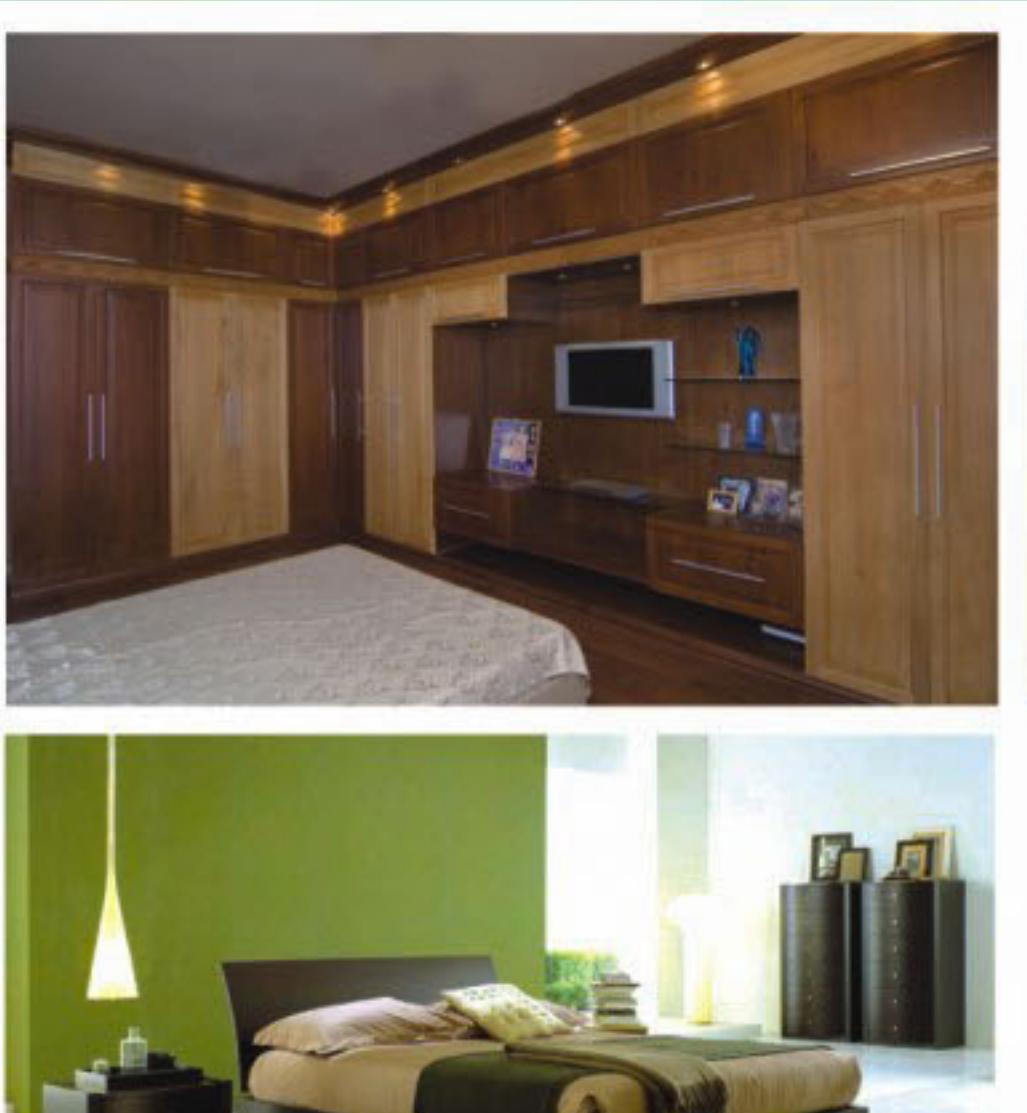
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