

HC asks for girl tortured by cops

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed Bangladesh National Women Lawyers' Association (BNWLA), a rights organisation, to bring the girl who was allegedly tortured in police custody in Kushtia in September, before it on November 29.

During hearing on a rule, the HC bench of Justice Naima Haider and Justice Muhammad Khurshid Alam Sarkar said it would exclusively record statements from the girl on November 29 about the torture allegation.

According to a report published in the daily Prothom Alo on September 28, police detained the girl and her mother from Rajbari on suspicion on September 9, and tortured them for six days in the police station and the office of Detective Branch of police in the district.

Police also implicated the duo in three separate murder cases, it said.

Deputy Attorney General Mokhlesur Rahman told The Daily Star that the victims (daughter and mother) were released a few days after they were detained.

The same bench on October 1 issued a suomoto rule asking the government and police authorities to explain why they should not be directed to take action against the responsible persons.

It issued the rule after BNWLA leader Advocate Fahima Nasrin Munni placed the report before it.



Discussants at a roundtable on "Mainstreaming of women entrepreneurs with disabilities and our responsibilities" jointly organised by Disable Rehabilitation and Research Association, Manusher Jonno Foundation, and The Daily Star at The Daily Star Centre in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

House passes obituary motion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The House on the first day of its 15th session yesterday unanimously adopted an obituary motion on the death of Awami League lawmaker from Chittagong and the party president member Akhtaruzzaman Chowdhury Babu.

The lawmaker passed away due to kidney failure in Singapore's Mount Elizabeth Hospital on November 4 at the age of 71.

Speaking in parliament, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, also president of ruling AL, said AL and the country suffered an irreparable loss at the death of Akhtaruzzaman, one of the 1971 Liberation War's organisers.

She said Akhtaruzzaman immensely contributed to the party's welfare, especially after Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's assassination in 1975 when the party was going through hard times.

"Babu bhai (Akhtaruzzaman) also helped many of our leaders who were staying abroad during the 1/11 period with money," she added.

A total of 16 MPs also reminisced about Akhtaruzzaman's role as one of the prime organisers of Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendro at Kalurghat in Chittagong during the 1971 Liberation War.

The House also passed obituary motions on seven former MPs and six eminent personalities who died since the prorogation of the parliament's 14th session.

ARRESTED LIBYANS Envoy denies link

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Libyan Chargé d' Affaires in Dhaka Kamel Al-Mahjoub yesterday refuted an ATN Bangla report which stated that he had connections with three Libyan nationals arrested on October 24 for their alleged cheating in manpower recruitment.

"Supporters of assassinated Libyan president Muammar Gaddafi were hatching a conspiracy to tarnish the Libyan government's image with assistance from an electronic media," he said at a press conference in the capital's Hotel Westin.

The three and a Bangladeshi woman were arrested by Detective Branch of Police from a Gulshan hotel with 684 Bangladeshi passports, US \$ 1.81 lakh and Tk 10.66 lakh in their possession.

In the November 6 report, ATN Bangla said the three were seen attending a press conference of Kamel in Dhaka last July.

Kamel yesterday said those sitting beside him at the press conference were his colleagues and the embassy's staff and it was not his concern to see who was sitting next to his colleagues.

The report said as per detectives' claims, Kamel was selling visas with assistance from the three and misappropriated huge amounts of money.

PM won't join D-8 summit

Dhaka officially informs Islamabad

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka yesterday officially informed Islamabad of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's "inability" to participate in the D-8 summit scheduled for November 22.

The message was conveyed to Pakistan High Commissioner in Dhaka Mian Afrasiab Mehdi Hashmi Qureshi when he called on Foreign Secretary Mijarul Quayes at the latter's office yesterday.

Sources said Quayes told the Pakistan envoy that the prime minister was tired and slightly ill due to her hectic visit to Vietnam and Laos and the programmes marking the just concluded visit by the Belarusian premier to Bangladesh.

He also said Dhaka would soon announce who would be representing the prime minister at the D-8 Summit.

Foreign Minister Dipu Moni was sup-

posed to represent the premier but it remains uncertain as she is currently visiting Djibouti to attend the 39th Council of Foreign Ministers Meeting of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC).

Dipu Moni is due to return to Dhaka on November 19. She will also pay an official visit to Russia from November 22-25.

Earlier, officials said the foreign minister would go to Islamabad on November 20 to attend the D-8 Ministerial Meeting on November 21 and Summit on November 22.

On November 9, Pakistan Foreign Minister Hina Rabbani Khar visited Bangladesh and handed over the invitation letter of the Pakistan president to attend the D-8 summit.

The prime minister accepted the invitation but cancelled her visit on November 12 without showing any reason.

10-TRUCK ARMS HAUL CASES Cross-examination of Golam Rasul ends

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The cross-examination of the prosecution witness Golam Rasul, a police personnel, in the sensational 10-truck arms haul cases concluded yesterday.

The defence counsel for former state minister for home Lutuzzaman Babar and Abdus Sobhan Tarafder questioned him for about an hour.

Golam Rasul was a habildar of Bandar Police Outpost when the arms haul was seized in 2004. He is currently stationed in Jessore district court.

During his cross-examination, the defence accused him of giving false statement against Babar as per the instruction of the prosecution eight years after his earlier deposition. Rasul however denied the claim.

The Metropolitan Special Tribunal-1 in Chittagong adjourned its proceedings till today.

Around 10 truckloads of arms and ammunition were seized at a Chittagong Urea Fertiliser Ltd jetty on April 2, 2004. Two cases—one for smuggling firearms and the other under the arms act—were filed with Karnaphuli Police Station the next day.

Four held with heroin in Sylhet

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Rapid Action Battalion arrested four people with 400 grammes of heroin worth Tk 10 lakh in their possession at Hotel Gulshan in Sylhet city on Tuesday night.

The arrestees are Mohammad Ali of Purbodhola upazila in Netrokona; Yaor Miah of Jagonnathpur under Sunamganj; Liton Miah and Sanaul Haque of Dakshin Surma upazila and Golapganj upazila in Sylhet respectively.

They were immediately handed over to Sylhet Kotwali Police Station and later, the Judicial Magistrate Court sent them to jail yesterday.



UNFPA Representative Arthur Erken, left, and Health and Family Welfare Minister AFM Ruhul Haque, second from left, at the launching of a UNFPA report, "State of World Population 2012", at Hotel Sonargaon in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: COURTESY

UNPLANNED PREGNANCY 222m women suffer in developing world

Says UNFPA report

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) report stated that family planning was a right and about 222 million women in developing countries have unplanned pregnancy for not having access to contraceptives or family planning information.

The annual report also emphasised on ensuring the right of the individual to freely and responsibly decide how many children to have and when to have them.

UNFPA launched the report, "State of World Population 2012", at Hotel Sonargaon in the capital yesterday alongside in all the capitals of the world. The theme is, "Family planning, human rights and sustainable development."

According to the report, a majority of people in the developing countries do not have any kind of family planning.

The report also mentions that a three to five-year gap between each childbirth could reduce the child mortality rate in developing nations by 46 percent.

Health and Family Welfare Minister AFM Ruhul Haque, present as chief guest, said the country's family planning programmes were functioning well.

"We are lucky that a large proportion of our population consists of young people," he said.

He also cited the examples of China and other Western countries where an increasing elderly population has become a burden for the nations.

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