

# 10-yr-old Dhaka slum girl 'raped by neighbour'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A 10-year-old girl was allegedly raped by her neighbour at an Agargaon slum in Dhaka early yesterday.

When the girl screamed, other neighbours caught Liton, 35, the suspected rapist, and handed him over to Sher-e-Bangla Nagar police.

During the incident the girl was sleeping alone in a room while her parents in an adjoining one, said Officer-in-Charge GG Biswas.

The girl was taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital of which One-stop Crisis Centre Co-ordinator Bilkis Begum said following a forensic test they primarily found evidence of rape in her body.

More tests will be conducted for confirmation, she added.

The OC said a case was filed with the police station, accusing Liton, who confessed to the crime during primary interrogation.



Two foot bridges, built just yards of each other for reasons yet to be known and as per dimensions of the former two lane Dhaka-Chittagong highway, continue to exist even though the road has been upgraded to four lanes, posing a threat for unsuspecting vehicles which might miss the shrinking of lanes at this spot near the Dania College in Jatrabari. The photo was taken on Monday.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

# Finish trial of 3 Khagrachhari JMB men in 3 months

HC directs lower court

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday ordered the lower court concerned to finish the trial proceedings of a case against three alleged JMB leaders of Khagrachhari in the next three months.

The court also asked the judge of Special Tribunal-1 of Khagrachhari to submit a report on the progress of the case's trial proceedings against the alleged JMB leaders Abdur Rahim Delwar and Yunus Ali.

The HC passed the order during hearing on an appeal filed by Yunus, seeking bail.

Deputy Attorney General Shaikh AKM Moniruzzaman Kabir told The Daily Star that the police arrested the trio on September 27, 2009 for allegedly setting up a training centre at Matiranga of Khagrachhari and training JMB members there.

A case was filed against them with Matiranga Police Station the following day, he said. The trial court on July 24 this year rejected Yunus bail petition. He filed an appeal with the HC, the DAG said, adding that the HC yesterday denied bail to Yunus.

# MISSIONS OBSERVE MOURNING DAY Era badly misses Bangabandhu

New Delhi discussion told

STAR REPORT

Speakers at a discussion in New Delhi yesterday stressed the relevance of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's dynamic and charismatic leadership, saying it could have brought peace and prosperity to South Asia much earlier.

The present era badly missed it in the context of establishing shared progress in the region, they said.

They commended Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's "bold" leadership in taking forward her father's sentiment and dream for the betterment of Bangladesh and beyond, reports our correspondent there.

The discussion on "Bangabandhu's vision for peace, progress and prosperity in South Asia and Beyond" was organised in the Bangladesh high

commission marking Bangabandhu's 41st death anniversary, also known as National Mourning Day.

High Commissioner Syed Muazzem Ali said Bangabandhu dedicated his life amidst all adversities for his people's independence and it was "the source of inspiration and aspiration for all freedom fighters".

Earlier, Muazzem placed the Bangladesh flag at half mast and messages from the president, prime minister and foreign minister were read out.

A special prayer was offered for the salvation and eternal peace of the departed souls of Bangabandhu and most of his family members murdered on the day in 1975.

The discussion was followed by screening of a documentary on Bangabandhu's life.

Veteran journalist and former MPHK Dua, former Indian foreign secretary Muchkund Dubey and Brig Gen (retd) Onkar Singh Goraya, who fought in the Liberation War, were among the large number of diplomats, dignitaries and expatriate Bangladeshis who attended the programme.

They reminisced about the 1971 Liberation War and the reconstruction period afterwards.

The remaining Bangladesh missions, such as that in Mumbai, Kolkata, Karachi, Copenhagen, Thailand and Istanbul, similarly observed the day in a befitting manner with due solemnity.

The events included observing a one-minute's silence, blood donations and charity programmes, reports our diplomatic correspondent quoting press releases as saying.

# NIKO GRAFT CASE Hearing on charge framing adjourned till Aug 21

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday adjourned till August 21 the hearing on charge framing against BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia and 10 others in connection with the Niko graft case.

Judge Md Aminul Islam of the Special Judge Court-9 passed the order after Khaleda's lawyer, Sanaullah Miah, submitted a petition saying she would skip yesterday's hearing as she was physically ill. The other ground for her non-appearance was security.

Meantime, Barrister Moudud Ahmed submitted two petitions -- one for seeking stay on the trial proceedings and other for allowing him to see all the documents seized by the case's investigation officer, which the prosecution opposed by saying there was no cogent ground.

The court rejected the petitions. On August 10, the prosecution completed placing arguments on the charge framing.

Yesterday, Moudud Ahmed and five others, now on bail, were present at the court. BNP Senior Vice Chairman Tarique Rahman's business partner Giasuddin Al Mamun is in jail, while three others are absconding.

The Anti-Corruption Commission filed the case in December 2007 accusing Khaleda and several others of abusing power to award a gas exploration and extraction deal to Canadian company Niko Resources when she was the prime minister between 2001 and 2006.

# Chhatra Jote agitates to stop Rampal plant

Intercepted by police at Shahbagh, six injured



Activists of left student organisations climb on the barbed wire barricades as they try to break through them, during an anti-Rampal power plant demonstration.

DU CORRESPONDENT

After scuffling with police and breaking through barbed wire barricades, the activists of an alliance of left-leaning student organisations yesterday blocked the capital's Shahbagh intersection for one hour demanding stopping of the construction of Rampal power plant near the Sundarbans.

The protest had brought the traffic to a halt.

When the activists of Pragatishil Chhatra Jote were marching towards the intersection from the Dhaka University campus, they were intercepted by police in front of the public library, leading to the scuffles.

Snehardi Chakrabarti Rintu, general secretary of a faction of Samajtantrik Chhatra Front, claimed that at least six activists were injured during the scuffles. Of them, Gobinda Das was taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital and four took first aid, he said.

"We will demonstrate across the country on August 18, protesting the police attack on our peaceful demonstration," announced Naima Khaled Monika, president of Samajtantrik Chhatra Front (SCF), while addressing a rally at the intersection.

They withdrew the blockade after police officials requested them to clear the road.

Abu Bakar Siddique, officer-in-charge of Shahbagh Police Station, said they had stopped the protesters because there were hospitals in the area.

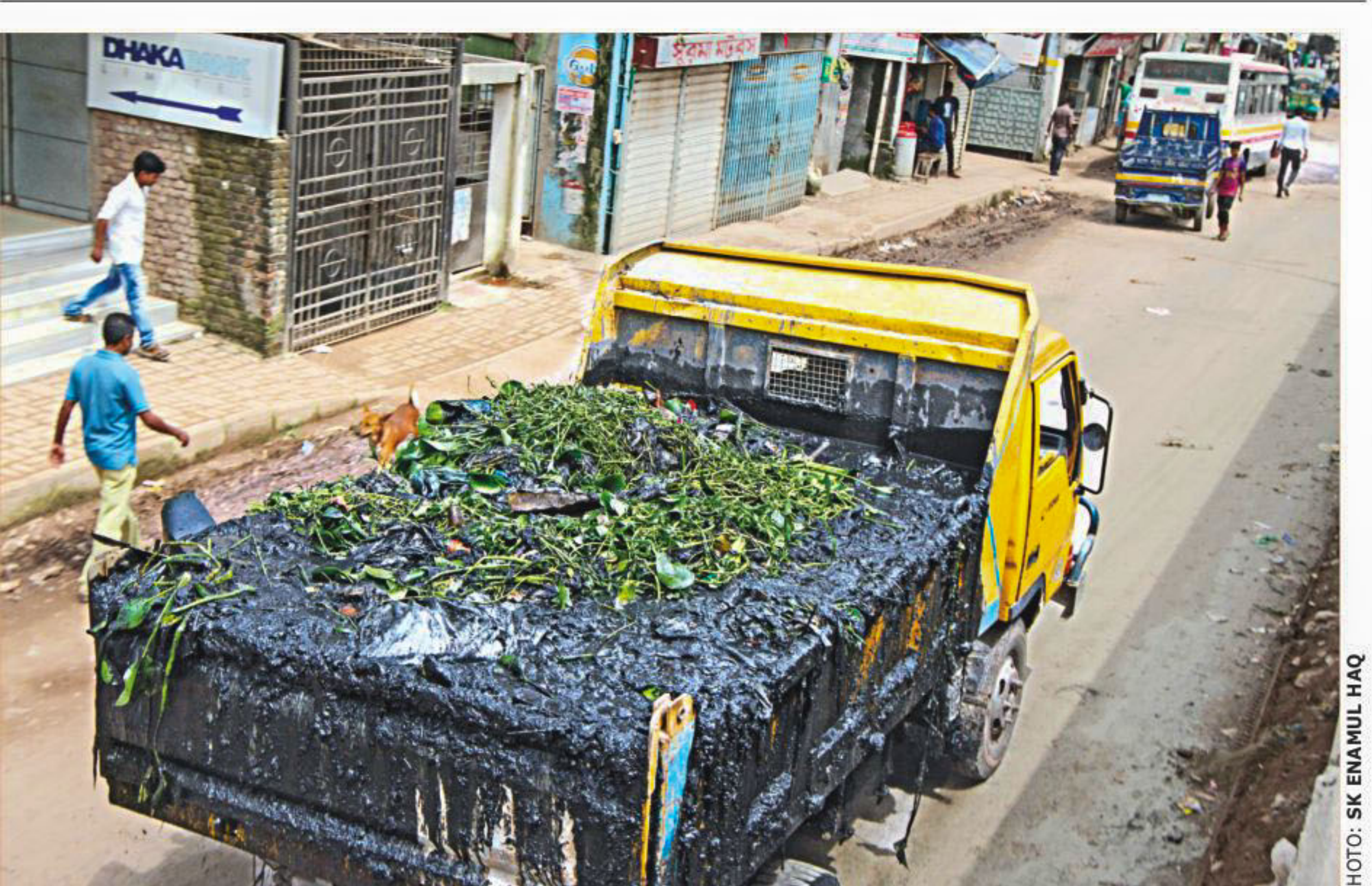
Addressing the rally, the student leaders said the government was constructing the power plant in the interest of the neighbouring country despite knowing that it would damage Bangladesh's environment.

Imran Habib Rumon, president of a faction of SCF, said, "If a referendum is held, the majority would vote against the construction of the plant... The coal used for the plant will poison the water of the lakes and rivers of the Sundarbans and damage the biodiversity."

"The government wanted to please the neighbouring country and its company ignoring our interest," said President of Chhatra Federation Saikat Mollik.

The student leaders urged all to join the August 20 anti-Rampal plant rally by the National Committee to Protect Oil Gas Mineral Resources, Power, and Ports, which will be held at the Central Shaheed Minar in the capital and in the district and upazila headquarters.

The 1,320MW plant site is just 14km upstream the Sundarbans Reserve Forest. A Bangladesh-India joint venture company is in the process of setting up the \$1.8 billion coal-based plant.



An open truck filled with sewage in the capital's Dholaipar area near the Mayor Hanif Flyover yesterday. Though cleaning these drains are vital to improve the city's drainage system, the way this truck is transporting the waste in daytime spreading malodour and dropping some of it on the street, it's just adding to the city dwellers' misery.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

# Govt making anti-terrorism units stronger

FROM PAGE 3

Nirmul Committee, at the capital's Bangladesh Institute of Law and International Affairs (Bilia). More than 4,000 militants were arrested between 2005 and 2016, he said, adding some were serving jail sentences and some other under trial.

"All of them were involved with Shibir politics and later surfaced under different names," he said, referring to the Jamaat-e-Islam associated student body.

The then politicians had sheltered them, he claimed.

Acting President of the Nirmul Committee Shahriar Kabir said all the militants groups were inspired by Wahhabism (ultraconservative Islam) and Jamaat-e-Islami founder Abu Ala Maududi.

He suggested keeping religion away from the state and the constitution to root out militancy.

Saying that Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman wanted to found a secular state where all faiths would coexist, he said the 1972 constitution was a reflection of his philosophy.

His philosophy was destroyed by

presidents Ziaur Rahman and HM Ershad, he said, adding that the two generals brought back communalism in Bangladesh.

Blaming communalism for militancy, cultural personality Ramendu Majumder said the youths with advanced knowledge in technology should be used in the anti-militancy combat. Maj Gen (retd) Mohammad Abdur Rashid, Maj Gen (retd) Mohammad Ali Shikdar, Air Commodore Ishfaq Ilahi Choudhury, and Adviser of the Nirmul Committee Justice Syed Amirul Islam also spoke.

# A teenage wasteland

FROM PAGE 3

Even though there is a school but the attendance is very low, said Zinnat Ara Nabina, principal of Chawk Bazar Government Primary School. "Some do come to school," she said, adding, "Poverty remains one of the main reasons for their families to not to send them to school."

When asked why he fixed his

daughter's marriage at such a young age, instead of sending her to school, Mitu Begum's father, a day labourer, unabashed said, "It is better we get our daughters married off quickly. We cannot even look after ourselves properly, how will we take care of them?"

BCC had arranged health camps to make people aware about receiving health services and child marriages,

but to no avail, said Matiur.

Akkas Hossain, president of Consumer Association of Bangladesh (CAB) and a rights activist, said, "Most of the people of Rasulpur char are illiterate and not aware, so they cannot utilise the government's services properly. A joint collaboration between the government and NGOs is a must to mitigate the crisis."



Documents being exchanged after the Public Libraries Department, and British Council signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) in Ministry of Cultural Affairs in Dhaka yesterday, for digitalising all the libraries, under Public Library. The department Director General Ashish Kumar Sarkar and British Council Country Director Barbara Wickham inked the agreement for a five-year project to which Melinda Gates Foundation will provide financial support. Cultural Affairs Minister Asaduzzaman Noor, among others, was present.

PHOTO: COLLECTIVE