

### Why not compensate families?

HC asks govt  
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday issued a rule asking the government to explain in four weeks as to why it should not be directed to give Tk 20 lakh in total as compensation to the families of two children of Kamrangirchar, who were arrested in connection with a murder case.

It issued the rule for the negligence of police in properly applying the law regarding the arrest of eight-year-old boys in the case filed for killing another child Alif Bhuiyan in Kamrangirchar of Dhaka.

The Daily Star is not mentioning the boys' names as per its policy.

A bench of Justice Quazi Reza-Ul Hoque and Justice Mohammad Ullah came up with the rule following a writ petition filed by rights organisation Children's Charity Bangladesh Foundation seeking explanation about the detention of the two.

The organisation submitted the writ petition

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Vehicles travel slowly amid dense fog on the Barisal-Dhaka highway in Kashipur on the morning of November 27, as the weather continues to disrupt communication throughout the district for the last couple of days. But some of the vehicles still refuse to turn on their fog lights, posing a risk to others on this narrow stretch of road.

### MAIMED BY STALKERS HC directs govt to bear cost of treatment

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed the government to bear all the expenses for the treatment of Shahanur Alam, who was maimed by stalkers of his daughters in Jhenidah.

The health secretary and director general of the directorate of health services have been ordered to take steps to this effect.

On October 16, Shahanur, 52, was beaten up with iron rods allegedly by Kamal Hossain, secretary of Nalbhanga union unit Jubo League and also a UP member, and six others because Shahanur complained to leaders of Nalbhanga village in Kaliganj that a gang, led by Kamal, was stalking his daughters.

They allegedly threatened to burn younger daughter's face with acid if the two cases filed against them were not withdrawn.

The legs of Shahanur had to be amputated on November 6.

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## Child marriage most egregious human rights violation

Speakers tell ceremony awarding three persons, one govt unit

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Child marriage is the most egregious form of human rights violation and there is no scope to decrease marriageable age of young women from 18 years, speakers told an award-giving ceremony yesterday.

They also underscored the need for comprehensive and combined efforts of the government, development organisations, private sector and civil society along with funding to ensure empowerment and security of the country's women.

The award was presented for "Preventing Child Marriage and Reducing Gender Based Violence-2016", which is also the theme of the ceremony organised by the High Commission of Canada in Bangladesh in a hotel in the capital.

Khulna Divisional Commissioner Abdus Samad got the award for conducting 276 mobile courts, filing 340

cases and handing down punishment to 72 persons, says a handout.

Former deputy commissioner (DC) Habibur Rahman received the award for his leadership and active role which resulted in Lalmonirhat becoming one of the leading districts making progress on the issue, it said.

Another former DC, Shafiqul Islam, was recognised for taking up several initiatives with stakeholders of Meherpur which created awareness to a significant extent, added the handout.

Lastly, the Government Innovation Unit-Prime Minister's Office (GIU-PMO) was honoured for drawing the attention of local government offices to unauthorised marriage registrars, sensitising them to the importance of tackling the practice and providing training to the offices and those engaged in the practice.

High Commissioner Benoit-Pierre Laramée said child brides face an

increased risk of violence throughout their lifetime.

"Even worse, girls who marry before 18 often lack empowerment and awareness, and they are sadly more often accepting of domestic violence than their peers who marry after 18. We know that girls who marry young are powerless to stop the violence," he said.

A commitment to ending child, early and forced marriage is actually a pledge to uphold the rights of women and girls, said the high commissioner.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's International Affairs Adviser Gowher Rizvi said the entire society must be held accountable and no responsible person, be it the upazila nirbahi officer, marriage registrar, headmaster or superintendent of police, can turn a blind eye to it.

"Those who will turn blind eye will take to task," he said. "We should not be dismayed," he said regarding

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The Canadian high commission in Dhaka awarded three current and former government officials and an organisation, in appreciation of their contributions to preventing child marriage and gender-based violence, at Lakeshore Hotel in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

## 60pc sex workers minors

Reveals Manusher Jonno Foundation study on three brothels

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Around 60 percent of sex workers started prostitution in different brothels at the age of 10 to 16, said a non-government study.

This early initiation also exposed them to different health complications, said the study of Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF).

The findings of the study titled "Sex Workers' Rights are Human Rights: Psychosocial and Economic Cost of Brothel Eviction in Bangladesh" was unveiled at a roundtable in the capital's Cirdap auditorium yesterday.

MJF with the support of UKaid conducted the study on the basis of evicted sex workers in three brothels in Tangail, Khulna and Madaripur. Data was collected from January to June this year.

Around 2,500 sex workers were evicted from Madaripur in 2013, around 3,000 from Tangail and around 700 from Khulna in 2014.

Of them, the study team inter-

viewed 180 sex workers, held 3 focus group discussions with 40 participants and one consultative meeting, made 12 key in-depth interviews (KIIs), and analysed five case studies.

Around 53 percent incidents of evicting brothels occurred due to local political pressure aiming for grabbing lands.

Around 90 percent of the evicted sex workers claimed they did not get any help from police during eviction.

Around 90 percent evictees faced violence during the eviction, while around 91 percent suffered from psychological trauma, said ASM Amanullah, the study team leader and professor of Sociology of Dhaka University.

Also, without rehabilitation, 90 percent of the evicted sex workers continue prostitution in other places such as parks and open spaces.

Because of the eviction, the state loses thousands of job, business houses and huge financial transactions.

When the Kandapara brothel in Tangail was functioning, daily average transaction of all business of that area was around Tk 73 lakh. But the amount came down to Tk 2.3 lakh after eviction.

The study also came up with recommendations to protect rights of sex workers, including, formulation of a law regarding rights of sex workers and brothels, sensitising law enforcers about the rights and coordination of NGOs' activities.

State Minister for Social Welfare Nuruzzaman Ahmed emphasised on raising awareness so that children are not forced into prostitution.

MJF Executive Director Shaheen Anam said the government should take necessary steps to ensure security of sex workers and protecting their rights.

Ain o Salish Kendra Senior Deputy Director Nina Goswami, National Human Rights Commission Bangladesh Member Meghna Guhathakurta, also spoke.

### Fulbaria killings protested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Protesting the killing of two persons including a teacher of Fulbaria Degree College in Mymensingh, people from all walks of life formed a human chain at the town's Shaheed Firoz-Jahangir Square yesterday afternoon.

Covering their mouths with black cloths, students and teachers of the college also participated in the programme, organised by Bangladesh Chhatra Union Mymensingh, and demanded exemplary punishment for those responsible.

Mymensingh Sammlito Shikhhak Samaj also protested the killings. The organisers also threatened to go for tougher movements if their demand was not met.

Meanwhile, the section 144 imposed on Sunday midnight by the upazila administration was withdrawn yesterday night around 8:00pm.

Earlier, all the classes and examinations were suspended for the second day. Only a few vehicles were seen plying the streets. Most of the shops remained closed.

Meanwhile, four persons including a student were arrested in connection to Sunday's incident. They were produced before a Mymensingh court Monday, which sent them to jail, said police.

## We lost everything

Says Fulbaria college teacher's widow, alleges local lawmaker influenced cops

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Nothing could stop the heart-rending cry of deceased Abul Kalam Azad, a teacher of Fulbaria Degree College in Mymensingh.

"We have lost everything. Who will look after us now?" wailed Saifunnahar, also a colleague of Azad. She alleged that local lawmaker Advocate Muslem Uddin was behind the Sunday's incident, who influenced police. She also demanded a judicial probe to bring the culprits to book. "I urge the prime minister to take initiative for better future of my children who are still students," she said.

The couple has three children -- Samiha Azad Shochi, an honours final-year student at Bangladesh Agricultural University; Sabiha Azad Shormi, second-year student at Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University; and Mohsi Asif Azad Sourab, an SSC examinee from Mymensingh Zila School; family sources said.

"Azad always headed out from our residence in Jamtola area around 7:00am," she said. "When I reached the college that day, I saw him near the academic building. We also exchanged greetings," said a sobbing Saifunnahar. Azad also performed his exam duties from 9:00am till noon, college sources said.

Azad, an assistant professor of Botany, hailed from Nandail upazila, and Safor Ali, 65, of Fulbaria, were killed and over 100 others injured when police swooped on a demonstration by teachers, students and staff



Abul Kalam of the college in Fulbaria on Sunday.

Witnesses said demonstrators brought out a procession on the campus demanding nationalisation of the college. Around 1:00pm, a team of police entered the college and started beating the demonstrators.

Safor Ali, a day labourer, was crossing the college area during the clash. Doctors at

alleged Saifunnahar, who was also on the spot.

When Azad's colleagues were tending to him in the staff room, a group of police allegedly led by Sub-inspector Rafiqul Islam started banging on the door and hurled abuse at them, she said.

Denying the allegation, SI Rafiq said he along with other officials was on duty there but did not act such way.

OC Rifat Khan of Fulbaria Police Station claimed he did not hear of any such allegation. "We will investigate the matter."

The cops said they were assigned there by their superiors but did not disclose the names, alleged teachers.

"My husband could have survived had police allowed him medicine or an



The grieving family of Abul Kalam Azad

Fulbaria Upazila Health Complex said he was brought dead there.

"Police did not even allow us to take the body to his beloved college. I request all to work together for materialising his dream of nationalising the college," said Saifunnahar.

"When he felt severe chest pain, he wrote the medicine's name and asked students and a college peon to get it but they were detained at the college gate,"

ambulance to take him to a hospital," wailed the widow. Her children and others present at the house -- none could hold back their tears.

"All the police present on the spot must be held responsible and brought to book for this heinous crime," Shochi, daughter of Azad, told this correspondent.

Khodeja Akter, Azad's cousin and colleague, echoed her.

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People from all walks of life, including family members of Abul Kalam Azad, form a human chain in Mymensingh yesterday, protesting the teacher's killing.

PHOTO: STAR