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FIRE TO GAIBANDHA SANTAL HOUSES Withdraw SP, other policemen

High Court orders government

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday ordered the immediate withdrawal of the superintendent of Gaibandha police for not cooperating properly with an enquiry over the torching of Santal houses during an eviction drive in November last year.

The court also directed the authorities concerned to withdraw all police personnel who were on duty on November 6 in Chamgari Beel, where the Santal houses were set on fire.

The bench of Justice Obaidul Hassan and Justice Krishna Debnath passed the order after holding a brief hearing on the enquiry report prepared by the chief judicial magistrate of Gaibandha.

The report said three police personnel and some local criminals had set fire to the houses during the eviction drive that left three people killed.

Gaibandha Chief Judicial Magistrate Mohammad Shahidullah in his report said three policemen, one of whom was from the Detective Branch, and some locals were directly involved in the torching of houses.

The magistrate added that he became sure that the three were police members, as they are seen wearing police uniform and badges in the video. But he could not identify them as they were wearing helmets and also because the video was shot from quite far.

Shahidullah said when he had asked the Gaibandha SP Ashraf Islam for the names and designations of the policemen and the DB official concerned, the police official did not give him those.

He rather told Shahidullah that two enquiries over the issue were being conducted by the police. The SP also said the footage of the torching needed to be forensically tested.

The bench in its yesterday's order said it appeared from the letter of the SP that he tried to avoid answering questions placed by the chief judicial magistrate to identify the people responsible.

"The inaction of the SP in providing information to the chief judicial magistrate is not acceptable," said Justice Obaidul Hassan.

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Rickshaw-van pullers in the city's Shantinagar sleep under mosquito nets with their three-wheelers parked on the pavement around 6:00am yesterday. They said the mosquito menace in the area forced them to buy nets and that they did not have lodging in the capital.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Six to hang for murder in Kushtia

UNB, Kushtia

A local court here yesterday sentenced six people to death in a case filed over the killing of a van driver in Kushtia Sadar upazila around four and a half years ago.

The six are Sajjad, Majed, Shukhad, Rashidul Islam, Kalai and Monser.

According to the prosecution, Sajjad and Majed called van driver Abu Bakkar Siddique of the same upazila out of his house on June 10, 2012.

The following day, local people found Bakkar's body near his house and informed police.

Victim's brother Nur Haque filed the murder case with Kushtia Model Police Station, accusing seven people.

Of the seven accused, Kamrul Islam was killed in a "gunfight" between criminals and police.

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'TREE MAN' DISEASE IN BANGLADESH

Weak immune system could be a cause

Say experts, stress the need for further research

PORIMOL PALMA

Weak immune system linked to severe malnutrition could be a cause of "tree man" disease, doctors believe.

In about the last one year, four Bangladeshis showed symptoms of the rare skin disorder, raising concerns among physicians.

They have suggested a prompt investigation for finding out the exact causes of the disease and developing the remedies.

"Malnutrition is a problem in our socio-economic context. This is one of the factors that lead to a weak immune system," Kabir Chowdhury, a skin specialist at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital, said.

"Viruses attack the body quite easily, if the immune system is weak."

The immune system is a "network" of cells, tissues, and organs that work together to protect the body against attacks by "foreign invaders". These invaders are infection-causing primarily microbes such as bacteria, parasite, fungus and virus.

The issue comes to the fore after three more people have showed the disease symptoms after "tree man" Abul Bajandar.

The man from Khulna has been suffering from epidermodysplasia verruciformis, a rare skin disorder commonly known as the tree man illness, which covers limbs with warts, making them look like tree branches. He is believed to be the fourth man in the world with tree man illness.

The 27-year-old had at least 18 surgeries at the hospital to remove the bark-like warts from his limbs. He is doing much better now and doctors are hoping for his recovery.

Ten-year-old Shahana Khatun, who is believed to be the first female suffering from the disease, is undergoing treatment at the burn unit of the DMCH. The girl from Netrokona was admitted to the hospital late last month.

Tajul Islam, 48, and his son Ruhul Amin, 10, of Pirganj in Rangpur, were also admitted to the DMCH burn unit early last year. They, however, left the hospital without

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Docs hopeful of Shahana's recovery

She undergoes surgery at DMCH

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Doctors performed a successful surgery on Shahana Khatun, possibly the country's first female with "tree-man syndrome", at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) yesterday.

Physicians at the DMCH Burn Unit conducted the operation from 12:30pm to 2:00pm, Samanta Lal Sen, national coordinator of the burn services, told The Daily Star.

He hoped the 10-year-old patient might not need a second surgery.

Headed by burn and plastic surgery unit chief Abul Kalam Azad, a six-member medical board is treating Shahana for free.

Daughter of hard-up farmer Shahjahan Mia of Netrokona, Shahana had

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'Stonehenge' found in Amazon rainforest



MAIL ONLINE

Hundreds of mysterious structures built into the Earth more than two thousand years ago have been discovered in the Amazon rainforest.

The remarkable earthworks have long remained hidden by trees - but, deforestation in recent years has unearthed more than 450 massive geoglyphs.

While little is known of their purpose, it's thought that these ditched enclosures were once used sporadically as ritual gathering places.

The Stonehenge-like ditches take up roughly 8,078 square miles Acre state, in the western Brazilian Amazon.

According to the researchers from the UK and Brazil, the find suggests the rainforest isn't as 'untouched' as previously thought.

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Engr Mosharraf secures bail in 2007 graft case

Cig court accepts charge sheet against the minister, two others

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Cig

A Chittagong court yesterday accepted the charge sheet against three people including Housing and Public Works Minister Engineer Mosharraf Hossain in a corruption case filed by the Anti-Corruption Commission in 2007.

The Court of Senior Special Judge Md Shahenur took the charges into cognizance. The court also granted bail to Mosharraf and Hotel Golden Inn Director Fakhrul Anwar as they submitted a bail petition, said Public Prosecutor of ACC Sanwar Ahmed Lavlu.

During hearing, the defence informed the court that one of the accused, former AL lawmaker and Hotel Golden Inn Managing

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PHOTO: STAR

A worker demolishes the under-construction two-storey building of Nabinpur Government Primary School in Meherpur's Gangni upazila yesterday. The LGED office in Meherpur asked the project contractor to knock down the building as it was built with low-quality materials. The contractor will rebuild the school.

Punishment for low-quality construction

Contractor asked to rebuild school building

AMANUR AMAN, from Kushtia

For using substandard materials, a company, which was constructing a school building in Meherpur's Gangni, has been asked to demolish the structure and rebuild the school.

Tamanna Trading
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SIBL
Social Islami Bank Limited
Prayer Timing February 8

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 5-30	12-45	4-15	5-52	7-15
JAMAAT 6-05	1-15	4-30	5-56	7-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

AMNESTY REPORT

13,000 hanged in Syrian 'human slaughterhouse'

AFP, Beirut

Amnesty International yesterday accused Syria's government of hanging up to 13,000 people at a notorious prison over five years in a "policy of extermination", two weeks before planned peace talks.

The damning report, titled "Human Slaughterhouse: Mass hanging and extermination at Saydnaya prison" near Damascus, goes into excruciating detail about the gruesome ritual of mass hangings between 2011 and 2015.

At least once a week, up to 50 prisoners were taken out of their cells for arbitrary trials, beaten, then hanged "in the middle of the night and in total secrecy", the report said.

"Throughout this process, they remain blindfolded. They do not know when or how they will die until the noose was placed around their necks."

Most of the victims were civilians believed to be opposed to the government of President Bashar al-Assad.

"They kept them (hanging) there for 10 to 15 minutes," a former judge who witnessed the executions said.

"For the young ones, their weight wouldn't kill them. The officers' assistants would pull them down and break their necks."

Amnesty said the mass executions amounted to war crimes and crimes against humanity, but were likely still taking place.

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