

PRISONERS IN FETTERS

HC summons DIG-Prisons

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday summoned the deputy inspector general of prisons (DIG-Prisons) in Dhaka to appear before it on March 9 for explaining why four under-trial prisoners were sent to the court in fetters.

Senior jail super of Keraniganj jail was also asked to do so.

The HC bench of Justice Obaidul Hassan and Justice Krishna Debnath passed the order when the fettered prisoners were produced before the court.

The police official concerned of Keraniganj jail, who brought the four prisoners to the HC, told the court that the jail authorities had sent them in fetters.

Usually, an accused is not produced before the HC in fetters.

The four prisoners are Habibur Rahman, Moniruzzaman, Nasiruddin and Giasuddin, who have been suffering in jail for more than 10 years

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Bhajan Baul performs folk songs at the Hason Raja Mancha of the Bengal Sangskriti Utsab Sylhet 2017 yesterday. The 10-day cultural festival, held at the city's AMA Muhih Sports Complex, includes an art camp, literary conference, and crafts fair, among others.

PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

Take steps to curb road accidents

Cabinet committee directs authorities

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In the wake of spiral road accidents across the country, the cabinet committee on law and order yesterday expressed deep concern over the phenomenon terming it alarming.

Out of six, five ministers that were present at the meeting, held at the home ministry, expressed concern while Shipping Minister Shajahan Khan, who is also a leader of transport workers, citing the statistics told the meeting that the number of road accidents has not increased, said sources.

Except Shajahan, all ministers said road accidents in recent time became "alarming". The meeting asked the authorities concerned to take immediate steps to bring the road accidents down.

Earlier, the shipping minister received criticism for his various comments on driving licence and road safety issues.

At least 811 people were killed and 1,677 others injured in 609 road crashes this year until Wednesday, according to Bangladesh Passengers' Welfare Association. On average, more than 15 people lost their lives on the road every day.

Reckless driving, run-down and unfit vehicles, modifying body structure of vehicles, establishing roadside kitchen markets, operating unauthorised three-wheelers on highways, and operating vehicles by unlicensed drivers, among other issues, are mainly to blame, said experts.

The meeting also expressed concern over the rising trend of drug addiction among students and asked law enforcing agencies, especially Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) to strictly monitor the bordering areas to stop drug smuggling. The committee stressed the need for moral education for students to refrain them from addiction.

The meeting also decided to bring the countrywide

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A tripartite alliance?

Sex workers allege politicians, fundamentalists, admin join hands to remove brothels

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Local influential politicians and religious fundamentalists with the help of administration play an active role in removing brothels in different parts of the country, alleged sex workers.

The vested quarters cashing in on religious sentiment remove brothels without ensuring any rehabilitation or arranging alternative livelihoods for sex workers, they claimed.

They made the remarks at a programme titled "Sharing Meeting with Journalists on Human Rights of Sex Workers" at Dhaka Reporters Unity yesterday.

Sex Workers Network (SWN) with the support of Manusher Jonno Foundation and HASAB (HIV/AIDS and STD Alliance Bangladesh) organised the event.

"We are being tortured physically and mentally by brokers and Sardars (leaders of

brothel). Even, police and local cadres harass us," said Evan Ahmed Katha, vice president of SWN, while reading out a written statement.

"They physically torture and rape us threatening to harass socially and legally. In most of the cases, the culprits are not punished, rather sex workers are blamed for every wrongdoing," said Katha.

"For sex workers, brothels are their residence and they feel safe there. But influential politicians and religious fundamentalists often unleash havoc there... even valuables and furniture of sex workers are looted and vandalised during eviction," said the statement.

"But we do not get any security... In past, it had been experienced that sex workers did not get support from law enforcers despite filing cases against perpetrators," alleged Katha. There are around one lakh sex

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DEATH OF DUTCH-BANGLA CHAMBER CHIEF

Cops still clueless

MUNTAKIM SAAD

It has been over six months, police are still clueless regarding the death of Dutch-Bangla Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DBCCI) president Hassan Khaled, 55, as according to the investigators, "there has been no solid lead yet".

Police recovered the decomposed body of Khaled from Keraniganj on July 26 last year, after he went missing from the Dhanmondi area around 9:00am on July 23 when he left home to buy medicines from a nearby shop.

Khaled's body was found floating near the bank of the Buriganga river. Later, his younger brother Murad Hassan filed a murder case with Dhanmondi Police Station.

Contacted, Sub-inspector Newazuddin Ahmed of detective branch, also the investigation officer of the case, told The Daily Star recently, "The investigation is still underway..."

Expressing frustration, victim's younger brother Murad said, "It has been six months, police could not identify the

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Hassan Khaled

Missed, deeply

MUNTAKIM SAAD

"He was my best friend. I used to share all my problems and happiness with him. But since the last 11 months, I have no one to talk to."

Laments a son while reminiscing about his father.

"Not a day goes by I don't think about him..." Iftekhar Ul Islam, an eleventh-grader, was unable to finish the sentence.

His father, Irfanul Islam, an accounts and admin official of the capital's Drik Gallery, was found dead in the bushes beside the Dhaka-Narayanganj Link Road on the evening of April 2 last year.

He went missing from Dhanmondi area the same day around 11:45am after withdrawing Tk 3.08 lakh from a private bank.

Eleven months into the investigation, law enforcers are yet to find any clue to the murder.

Hopeless, Iftekhar now seeks the prime



Irfanul Islam

minister's intervention. He said he wrote a letter to the premier seeking help in this regard. He sent the letter via e-mail and also by post to the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) on Wednesday.

Sunday was the 18th wedding anniversary of Irfanul Islam and his wife Johora Akhter.

"Every year on this day, my father used to bring flowers for my mother..." wrote Iftekhar on his Facebook.

While talking to this correspondent over the phone Johora could not stop crying, "Irfan was an honest man. He was simple and cordial," mourned Johora.

Iftekhar said, "I feel more wretched when I see how my mother has been suffering."

Meanwhile, the death of Irfanul has left the family in a fearful state.

"Every day I go out with my son in the

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President Abdul Hamid hands over certificates to the graduates at the 3rd convocation of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Agricultural University on its campus in Gazipur yesterday. In his speech, the president urged agriculture scientists and researchers to innovate climate-tolerant varieties of crops, newer technologies and strategies to protect agriculture from the adverse impacts of climate change. A total of 1,313 graduates were conferred degrees, while 11 got gold medals, in presence of Vice Chancellor Prof Mohammad Mahbubur Rahman. PHOTO: PID

Rehabilitation before eviction

Demand hawker leaders at press conference

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Hawker leaders yesterday demanded rehabilitation of all hawkers before evicting them from the capital's footpaths.

Addressing a press conference at Mukti Bhaban, they said they were not against freeing footpaths but the authorities will have to ensure their rehabilitation first. They will also stage a rally in front of Jatiya Press Club on Sunday to realise their demands including release of some hawker leaders and withdrawal of cases against them, said Sekendar Hayat, adviser of Bangladesh Hawkers Union.

Convener of Hawker Samannaya Parishad Abul Hossain demanded that the mayor prepare a new list of hawkers for rehabilitation as the previous one, prepared by the Dhaka South City Corporation, does not include all of them.

Since January 15, DSCC has been conducting drives in Gulistan and its adjacent areas to keep footpaths free from hawkers.

Ex-BNP leader's son held for Facebook post

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police yesterday arrested the son of a former BNP standing committee member on the charge of making derogatory remarks on Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on Facebook.

Chowdhury Irad Ahmed Siddiqui, 45, son of Chowdhury Tanvir Ahmed Siddiqui, was arrested in the capital's airport area, said Masudur Rahman, deputy commissioner (media) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police.

In primary interrogation, Irad said he stayed in the Netherlands and posted derogatory remarks on Bangabandhu and his daughter Hasina, opening different Facebook pages, said Masud.

Irad is wanted in at least five cases, he said.

Govt to relocate factories from Dhaka

Amu tells parliament

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has planned to shift all chemical and plastic factories, electronic goods manufacturing factories, and printing houses from Dhaka for making the city livable, Industries Minister Amir Hossain Amu told parliament yesterday.

Replying to lawmakers queries, he said, "Many plastic factories and printing houses had been established in Dhaka unplanned and environment unfriendly way. We are planning to shift all these factories and printing houses to Sirajdikhan upazila in Munshiganj."

A plastic industrial zone and a printing industrial zone will be built there under Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC), he said. Setting up of a chemical village at Keraniganj for shifting chemical factories is under way, the minister said, adding that BSCIC was also establishing an electronic goods manufacturing industrial zone at Tangibari in Munshiganj.

Cricketer Sunny's mother gets bail

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday granted bail to Nargis Akhter, mother of cricketer Arafat Sunny, after her surrender before it in connection with a case filed for torturing a 23-year-old woman, who claimed to be Sunny's wife.

Metropolitan Magistrate SM Masud Zaman gave the order after Nargis surrendered seeking bail in the case.

On February 1, Nasrin Sultana filed the case against Sunny and his mother under Women and Children Repression Prevention Act.

In her complaint, Nasrin alleged that Sunny in his mother's direction demanded Tk 20 lakh as dowry six months after Nasrin and Sunny got married on December 4, 2014.

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US not in competition with India or China in Bangladesh

Marcia Bernicat tells int'l confce at IUB

UNB, Dhaka

US Ambassador in Dhaka Marcia Bernicat yesterday said the United States is not in a competition with either India or China here in Bangladesh but share the goal of a prosperous, safe, and stable society for the country.

"I believe that all India, China, and the United States share the goal of a prosperous,



safe, and stable society for Bangladesh," she said dispelling a notion regarding competition among the three global powers in Bangladesh.

She said Bangladesh and its neighbours are missing out on significant opportunities because of insufficient regional connectivity.

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ADMISSION INFORMATION:
83/B, Kemal Ataturk Avenue, Banani, Dhaka - 1213
Phone: 9897387, 58815387, Ext: 100, 199;
E-mail: info@aiub.edu

Hotline:
01844115000(Info)
01844115002(Dept.)