

# SI booked for 'abusing' housewife

## Also faces charges of looting

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushiya

A five-month pregnant woman has filed a case accusing a sub-inspector of assaulting her and taking away the valuables from her house.

Maria Khatun, 19, filed the case with the Chief Judicial Magistrate's court in Meherpur yesterday accusing SI Laskar Lazul Islam alias Zia of Meherpur Sadar Police Station.

She had been admitted to Meherpur General Hospital.

She said the accused had tortured her on Tuesday afternoon when he went to her house to look for her husband.

According to the complaint, SI Zia and two constables went to Maria and her husband Mehedi Hasan Baker's house in Dighirpara area of Meherpur town and told Maria that they were looking for Baker as a general diary was lodged against him over vandalism.

Baker, a third year student of Meherpur Government College, was not home at the time.

SI Zia forcibly entered her home and started rummaging through their belongings, the five-month pregnant woman wrote in her statement.

The SI then allegedly asked where

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1



Police taking leaders of Paltan unit Chhatra League to a Dhaka court yesterday. Nine leaders of the pro-Awami League student body were arrested on Tuesday after allegedly assaulting policemen. Story on page 3.

PHOTO: STAR

# DEMRA DOUBLE MURDER

## Charges pressed against two

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police yesterday submitted a charge sheet against two suspects accusing them of killing two five-year-old girls in the capital's Demra on January 7.

Golam Mostafa, 28, and his cousin Azizul Bawani, 30, were arrested in the capital's Jatrabari and Demra a day after the killing of Faria Akter Dola and Nusrat Jahan in Konapara area.

The arrestees later confessed to the crimes before a Dhaka court. They are now in jail.

"We have submitted the charge sheet before a Dhaka court after investigation," said Mohammad Fari Uddin, deputy commissioner (Wari) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police.

Mostafa had raped Dola while both of the suspects attempted to rape Nusrat before killing them, he told The Daily Star.

The suspects had lured the children to a flat and confined them to a room. The men strangled the girls after they started screaming, police said earlier.

# Pineapple

FROM PAGE 16

Growers said the pineapples are grown in many places of the district, such as Bogachari, Ramhori Para, Kutukhari of Naniarchari upazila; Tommedung, Bandhuk Vanga, Kayandya, Ajaribag of Rangamati Sadar upazila, and various other places of Longadu, Barkal, Jurachari and Bilaichari upazilas.

Cultivator Sunil Kanti Chakma, 35, from Jogonatoli village in the same upazila, said he grew 15,000 pineapple plants on his three acres of land last year. "I am very happy that the pineapples have arrived early. I have started selling them last week."

Muhammad Harunur Rashid and Muhammad Saiful Islam, traders from Chattogram, said they come to this market often to collect pineapples from the hills, which they later sell in different markets in the port.

"Fruits from the hills always have a huge demand in Dhaka and Chattogram due to its delicious taste," Rashid said.

Paban Kumar Chakma, deputy director of Rangamati DAE, said they always provided necessary assistance to the growers for successful cultivation.

# All AL units

FROM PAGE 1

In the first phase, the party will purchase land and construct offices in city, district, upazila, thana and municipality headquarters before constructing the ones at union levels.

The party high-ups asked the grassroots units to purchase land, the cost of which will be met from the party fund, sources said.

The ruling party has 11 city units, 64 district units, 497 upazila units, 341 municipality units, some 150 thana units and around 5,000 union units.

The party doesn't have any data on how many places it has offices in or where it owns land, said sources.

According to the sources, the party has its own offices in most of the districts.

The AL is going forward with the plans after constructing its central office on Bangabandhu Avenue in June, which the party financed from its own fund.

The 10-storey building was built at a cost of around Tk 15 crore and is considered the most luxurious building of any political party in Bangladesh.

AL General Secretary Obaidul Quader on January 12 sent letters to presidents and general secretaries of city, district, upazila, thana and municipality units asking them to inform him about the condition of their party offices by February 15.

In the letter, the AL general secretary asked the grassroots leaders whether the party had any offices in those places, who the owner of the land was, addresses and phone numbers of the offices, whether rented buildings were being used as party offices and whether the offices had internet, telephone and fax connections.

The letter also mentioned that as per the instructions of party president Sheikh Hasina, the AL had decided to construct office buildings where it has no offices.

"After getting information from grassroots [workers], we will come to know the latest condition of the offices and in how many places we need to purchase land for constructing offices," a central committee member of AL told The Daily Star, requesting anonymity.

He also said the grassroots leaders and activists would gather more in an office with modern facilities and this would strengthen the party and help narrow the gap between party men.

Contacted, AL Treasurer HN Ashiqur Rahman said the party had taken the initiative as it was a long-standing desire of party chief Sheikh Hasina. "We want functional party offices across the country," he added.

Asked about the budget of the initiative, he said they just took the initiatives and they would come to know the estimated cost after determining the present condition of the offices.

# Child murder

FROM PAGE 1

In some cases, children were beaten to death over trifles or on false allegations of theft. There were incidents in which a parent killed his or her child and then committed suicide, BSAF Director Abdus Shahid Mahmood said while releasing the report.

The findings are based on media reports published in 15 national dailies.

It said 4,566 children fell victim to different types of incidents last year, up by 18.75 percent from the previous year. The number was 3,845 in 2017.

Incidents of child rape fell by 3.71 percent last year when 571 children were raped. The number was 593 in 2017, the report pointed out.

The country saw verdicts in 31 child murder cases and 50 cases over child rape last year, said the BSAF director.

dents of violence against children could be higher as many such incidents go unreported.

The BSAF urged the government to take effective measures to ensure speedy trial of incidents of violence against children, exemplary punishment of the culprits and quick implementation of the verdicts.

It said parents should be more cautious to stop sexual violence against children.

The forum also called upon development organisations to strengthen their awareness campaigns to check violence against children.

Addressing the programme as the chief guest, National Human Rights Commission Chairman Kazi Reazul Hoque said the commission was not satisfied with the overall status of child safety in the country despite progress

TYPE OF INCIDENT	NUMBER OF CHILDREN (2018)	NUMBER OF CHILDREN (2017)	RISE/DECLINE (%)
Murder	418	339	23.30
Rape	571	593	-3.71
Abduction	150	177	-15.25
Death in road crash	627	357	75.63
Suicide	298	213	39.91
Drowning	606	391	54.99
Death due to wrong medical treatment, authorities' negligence	46	35	31.43
Physical torture, violence	262	271	-3.32
Injury in different incidents (road crash, attempted murder etc)	396	231	71.43
Child marriage and others	172	306	-43.79

"This reflects a sign of impunity and lengthy trial process in incidents of violence against children," he said.

Apart from murder, suicide, road crash and drowning were among the main causes of death of children last year, according to the report.

Sharing the findings, Shahid said 627 children were killed in road accidents last year, up by 75.63 percent from the previous year.

Besides, 606 children drowned last year. The number was 391 in 2017.

Forty-six children died due to wrong treatment by doctors and negligence of the authorities concerned. The number was 35 in 2017, the report said.

Last year, 812 children fell victim to sexual violence, including rape, - a 9.71 percent fall from 2017 when 894 children faced such incidents, according to the BSAF.

A total of 262 children suffered violence and torture, including corporal punishment, last year, compared to 271 in 2017.

It said 233 children went missing and 150 others were abducted last year. Of those kidnapped, 136 were rescued.

In 2017, at least 177 children were abducted, and 188 others went missing. Of the abductees, 98 were rescued.

Moreover, 396 children were injured in different incidents, including road accidents and attempted murder last year. The number was 231 in 2017.

The report also mentioned that 38 incidents of child marriage were reported last year, and at least 134 children averted it, thanks to government intervention.

BSAF Chairperson Khawaja Shamsul Huda said the actual number of inci-

in some areas.

Violence against children cannot continue this way, he said.

"We want an end to child marriage in the country. We want that no child will become a victim of rape."

Reazul stressed the need for setting up a directorate and a national commission to deal with issues of child rights.

He also urged the government to formulate rules in line with the Children Act 2013 and the Child Marriage (Restraint) Act 2017.

Sharmeela Rassool, chief technical adviser of the UNDP's Human Rights Programme, said about 1.3 million children have been involved in hazardous work in Bangladesh.

Efforts should be made to improve their condition, she added.

# Pray with the Pope

FROM PAGE 16

The hope is that Catholics will then join him.

Pope Francis, who once said he was a "disaster" with technology, swiped a tablet to launch the app, turning to the priest who held it for him to ask, "Did I do it?" - before the priest nodded.

The app is available in six languages.

It has been launched ahead of World Youth Day. A Vatican statement said the app would allow the faithful to "accompany the Pope in a mission of compassion".

Pope Francis is already very active on social media with Twitter, Facebook and Instagram accounts. On Twitter alone, he has more than 17.8 million followers. The Pope also reportedly plans to join Snapchat in the near future.

# Ducsu election after 3 decades

FROM PAGE 1

list for the long-pending election in May last year and published the first draft on October 31.

"As of now, nearly 38,000 students have been listed as voters and we hope that the final list will have names of more than 42,000," Proctor Prof AKM Golam Rabbani said yesterday.

Students in 17 dormitories will cast their votes in their respective halls, according to the Ducsu constitution.

Student leaders have welcomed the move to finally hold the polls.

DU Chhatra Union General Secretary Razib Das thanked the authorities for the initiative.

He, however, expressed fear that the election might not be fair as the polling booths would be set up inside the dormitories, which are dominated by Chhatra League, the pro-ruling Awami League student organisation.

The DU BCL said there was nothing to fear.

"We want the polls to be held peacefully and the students to elect their representatives of choice," Sonjit Chandra Das, president of the BCL, told The Daily Star.

Nurul Haque Nur, a joint convener of Bangladesh Sadharan Chhatra Odhikar Sangrakkhan Parishad, urged the authorities to ensure a "congenial atmosphere" for the election.

A few days ago, leaders of the platform, which spearheaded the recent quota reform movement, expressed

their desire to take part in the polls.

Ducsu was formed in 1922, a year after the DU was established. The aim of the platform is to promote cultural activities at the university and foster a spirit of cooperation among the students of different dormitories.

The previous Ducsu election was held in 1990. It was won by Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal's Amanullah Aman and Khairul Kabir Khokon panel. Chhatra Dal is the pro-BNP student wing.

All these years, the DU authorities took several initiatives to hold the polls. But those were unsuccessful, mainly due to violence and the fear of violence.

After the 1990 election, the then vice-chancellor Prof Moniruzzaman Miah announced the schedule for the next polls on January 12, 1991. But a group of students staged demonstrations demanding introduction of "special admission".

Later in 1994, the then VC Prof Emajuddin Ahmed announced an election schedule but that attempt was also halted. At that time, the BCL claimed the atmosphere for the polls was missing.

The committee constituted through the 1990 election was dissolved in 1998.

Following a writ petition filed by 25 former DU students in March 2012, the High Court on January 17 last year directed the authorities concerned and the government to hold the election in

six months.

Ali Asif Shawon, one of the 25 students, welcomed the move saying that they filed the writ to get back their "democratic right".

"We have earlier seen that the university authorities failed to hold the polls several times even after declaring the schedule. We don't want a repetition of that. We urge the authorities to hold a fair and inclusive election," he told this newspaper.

Following an appeal filed by the DU authorities, a Supreme Court chamber judge stayed the HC verdict on October 1 last year.

In the appeal, the university authorities said they had decided to hold the polls by March 15 this year.

Last Sunday, Ducsu polls Chief Returning Officer Prof SM Mahfuz said the schedule was likely to be announced in the first week of February.

For the election, the authorities held the first meeting of Paribesh Parishad, a body formed in the absence of Ducsu, on September 15 last year. It comprises representatives from the university authorities and different student organisations.

After the meeting, the DU VC said the Ducsu polls might be held by this March.

The student platform played a key role in all the movements during the 1971 Liberation War and the autocratic Ershad regime ousted in 1990.

# US concerned at reports of anomalies

FROM PAGE 1

Tom Babington, acting spokesperson of the administrator, in a statement said Green also pressed for the Bangladesh government to pursue every avenue to bring to justice the killers of USAID employee Xulhaz Mannan who was murdered in Dhaka around three years ago.

The two officials discussed strong friendship and alliance between the two countries along with the Rohingya refugee crisis and the upcoming conference on human rights to be hosted by the Bangladesh foreign ministry.

Green thanked Bangladesh for hosting over one million Rohingya refugees, some 750,000 of whom fled brutal military campaign by Myanmar military since August, 2017.

Noting Bangladesh's ambition to accelerate economic growth and attract foreign investment, he emphasised on the important roles that "citizen-responsive governance", transparency, the respect for human rights, and strong democratic institutions play in creating a conducive environment for business.

Dhaka, meanwhile, conveyed to Washington the new government's priorities that include eliminating corruption

and ensuring good governance by maintaining a strong policy of 'zero tolerance'.

Foreign Secretary Shahidul Haque, who is in Washington DC for political consultation to apprise the priorities, roadmap and vision of the new government of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, held talks with top US officials.

Shahidul said the present Bangladesh government looks forward to expanding the existing friendly ties with the USA in a multi-sectoral context, said a press release of the Bangladesh Embassy in Washington DC yesterday.

He noted that the recent internal situation in Northern Rakhine was aggravating the prolonged Rohingya crisis. He emphasised on the responsibility of Myanmar to create the right conditions for Rohingya repatriation in the Rakhine state and sought the US's support in resolving the crisis.

Shahidul further said Bangladesh would be happy to offer one of its special economic zones to US investors if they come forward.

The US officials assured full support in finding the solution of the Rohingya crisis.

The foreign secretary also held meetings with US Under Secretary of State for

Political Affairs, Ambassador David Hale; Ambassador Alice Wells, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, South and Central Asia Bureau; Ambassador Michael Kozak, Office Chief, Bureau of Democracy, Rights and Labour; Acting Assistant Secretary Carol Thomson O'Connell, Population, Refugee and Migration Bureau; Ambassador at Large John Cotton Richmond, Office Chief, Trafficking in person; and Ambassador at Large Nathan Sales, Counterterrorism Bureau and Counterterrorism Coordinator.

Bangladesh Ambassador to the USA Mohammad Ziauddin, along with senior officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Bangladesh Embassy in Washington DC, accompanied the foreign secretary during the meetings.

The foreign secretary was due to meet with the representatives of the National Cotton Council and Randall Schriver, Assistant Secretary, Asia Pacific, US Department of Defense yesterday. The two sides were expected to discuss arms procurement among others with defence officials, officials said.

# Sabbir, Taskin back in Tigers' fold

FROM PAGE 16

Imrul Kayes was the surprise exclusion from the one-day side after the left-hander scored two hundreds and a fifty in the home series against Zimbabwe last year. However, after failing in the two games against West Indies in the following series, Imrul was dropped from the team.

All-rounder Ariful Haque, left-arm seamer Abu Hider and left-arm spinner Nazmul Islam were also dropped from the ODI squad that was picked for the West Indies series.

There was a lot of talk about the inclusion of Sabbir, who was banned for

abusing a fan on social media. as his original ban was supposed to end on March 1, which would have ruled him out of the three-match ODI series in New Zealand ending on February 20.

The selectors however said that they received clearance from the Bangladesh Cricket Board's (BCB's) disciplinary committee, which reduced Sabbir's ban by one month. The selectors also added that Bangladesh ODI skipper Mahsrafe bin Mortaza had urged the selectors to include the batsman.

The 15-member Test squad for the three-match Test series that will follow

the ODI series in New Zealand was also named yesterday. Alongside Taskin, Tamim Iqbal also made a comeback after recovering from a left knuckle fracture, while pacer Abu Jayed was also recalled to the side.

Bangladesh will take part in the first match of the three-ODI series on February 13. The second and third matches will take place on February 16 and 20 respectively. The visitors will also take part in a three-Test series with the first one starting from February 28 and the other two matches scheduled for March 8 and 16 respectively.