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Street kids continue to be exploited

NGO working for them gives a grim picture in Dhaka

BISHAKHA DEVNATH

Rabeya boarded a launch for the first time when she was eight. As she arrived in Dhaka from Barishal, her grandmother abandoned her. Thus began Rabeya's life as a victim of sex exploitation.

Eight years later, she is now a mother of two, living on the streets. She calls Sadarghat launch terminal her home.

Rabeya is one of hundreds there who have no family ties and are trying to make it on their own. Many unscrupulous people take advantage of this and the children face exploitation.

Separation from their families is mostly driven by extreme poverty. They are either abandoned or they run away from home to escape an environment due to lack of care, in some cases, abuse, according to Local Education and Economic Development Organisation (LEEDO), that deals with street children across Dhaka.

The non-government organisation that is committed to helping the disadvantaged has opened schools for street children like Rabeya.

Homeless children make their way to Sadarghat mostly from areas that are connected to Dhaka by rivers. While girls like Rabeya are forced to become child sex workers, boys get

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A child collects discarded plastic bottles in Sadarghat Launch Terminal area. Like him, many other homeless children work under "sardars" who would sell the collected bottles and pay the children a small amount. The government is yet to act on its 2016 plan to rehabilitate street children in the capital. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Keep your families with you in districts

PM asks DCs again
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday again directed deputy commissioners (DCs) to stay in their official residences with their families.

Hasina issued the directive at the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Ecnc) meeting held at the planning ministry.

Planning Minister MA Mannan told journalists about the directives after the meeting yesterday.

The DCs who would disobey the directive would not be given the post again, sources in the planning ministry quoted her as saying.

Ministry officials claimed that many children of the DCs go to schools and colleges in Dhaka and their wives do not stay with them in the districts. Due to this, a number of DCs spend their weekends and holidays in the capital, they said.

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Cops to protect mangoes

HC orders govt to use police at orchards to stop mango adulteration

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed the government to deploy police at the mango orchards in Rajshahi region to prevent spraying of toxic chemicals on mangoes.

The divisional commissioner of Rajshahi and the deputy inspector general of police (Rajshahi range) have been asked to deploy the police in seven days.

The HC also ordered the authorities concerned to monitor the storehouses of mangoes and other fruits in Dhaka with surveillance teams so that harmful

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Shuffling personnel just to make do

Family planning services suffer due to slow progress in recruitments

MAHBUBUR RAHMAN KHAN

The family planning directorate has been suffering from manpower crisis as large number of posts have remained vacant for the last couple years thanks to the procrastination of different government bodies related to the recruitments.

Currently, over a fifth of the total posts at the Directorate General of Family Planning (DGFP) are vacant.

"We have been operating the family planning programmes by redistributing our manpower. We often have to pull-out staff from the centres in the unions and upazilas to the ones in the districts to mitigate the crisis," said a DGFP official concerned, preferring to be unnamed.

"This is why the centres at the unions and upazilas are often found vacant," he added.

Currently, there are a total of 52,000 posts in the directorate and of them, some 10,000 posts are vacant.

Recruitment of 3,000 staffers is underway, the official said.

He also said some 217 doctors' posts are vacant among a total of 1,210 posts.

The recruitment of 152 doctors with freedom fighter quota who were finally selected as the medical officers has been pending for more than a year.

The recruitment circular was published on May 31, 2017 and the final results came out on April 3, 2018.

The gazette notification for their joining is currently pending with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, the DGFP official said.

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Female pry teachers now need to be graduates

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Primary and mass education ministry has raised the minimum qualification from HSC-degree to graduation for the female candidates for assistant teacher and headmaster posts.

Akram-Al-Hossain, primary and mass education secretary, yesterday said, "We have fixed graduation as the minimum qualification for becoming assistant teacher for both male and female.

"We have issued a guideline today on the recruitment of government primary schools' teachers," he added.

Until the guideline was issued, females with HSC or equivalent degrees could apply for the posts whereas male candidates needed to complete graduation with

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London charging vehicles for air pollution

CNN ONLINE



London is the first city in the world to implement a 24-hour, seven day a week Ultra Low Emission Zone, inside which vehicles will have to meet tough emissions standards or face a charge.

Monday's introduction of the zone, known as the ULEZ, aims to reduce toxic air pollution and protect public health, according to a press release from the office of Sadiq Khan, mayor of London.

Vehicles are responsible for around half of harmful nitrogen oxide air emissions in the British capital, contributing to a toxic air health crisis that increases the risk of asthma, cancer and dementia

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Murder suspect killed in Ctg 'gunfight'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A murder suspect was killed in a "gunfight" with police in Chattogram city's Bakalia area yesterday.

The dead -- Saiful, 30 -- was the prime accused in local Juba League activist Lokman Rahman Rony murder case, said police.

Pranab Chowdhury, officer-in-charge of Bakalia Police Station, said they arrested Saiful along with Zia, 25, another accused in the case, in Jafarnagar area of the district's Fatikhari upazila early yesterday.

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PRAYER TIMING APRIL 10

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha

AZAN 4-35 12-45 4-45 6-24 7-45

JAMAAT 5-10 1-15 5-00 6-28 8-15

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

4 of a family burned in arson attack

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria

Four members of a family suffered burn injuries as criminals set fire to a house at Lochonpur village in Narsingdi's Raipura upazila early yesterday.

On suspicion, police have arrested two men -- Kajol Mia, 30, and Robin Ahmed, 28 -- from the same village yesterday afternoon.

The family members alleged that their neighbours, with whom they had a land dispute, committed the arson. Raipur police said the allegations would be looked into.

All four victims -- Muktamoni, 16, Sweety Akter, 13, Preety Akter, 11, and Khatun Nesa, 60 -- are being treated at the Burn and Plastic Surgery Unit of Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

Muktamoni, Sweety, and Preety are the daughters of Shamsul Mia, while Khatun Nesa is their paternal aunt.

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Fire service men carry the coffin of firefighter Sohel Rana to his home in Kishoreganj's Itna upazila yesterday. Sohel died of his injuries on Monday, 11 days after he was injured during the rescue operation in the FR Tower inferno in the capital's Banani.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Hero fireman's final farewell

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

"I am dying...visit me at the hospital if you can," were the final words he uttered to his mother, Halima Begum, over phone on the very day he was critically injured during the FR Tower rescue operation.

Just as the body of firefighter Sohel Rana arrived around 10:45am yesterday, the skies opened up to let raindrops accompany the tears of those at the Fire Service and Civil Defence Headquarters.

As his body was taken out of the ambulance, wrapped in the departmental flag, his colleagues and family members struggled to hide the sorrow pouring out of their eyes.

The preparations for his final farewell had begun.

Many firefighters were overheard recalling the bravery Sohel showed in the rescue operation during the FR Tower fire tragedy on March 28.

His younger brother, Uzzal Mia, broke down in tears while seeking blessings for the departed soul, just minutes before the first namaz-e-janaza was held on the headquarters premises.

"My brother sacrificed his life for the country. He was our only hope...His departure has left our family out on the streets," a tearful Uzzal said as he sought the prime minister's attention towards his family.

After attending the namaz-e-janaza, Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan assured a job for one of Sohel's family members.

"Sohel was the lone bread earner of his family. We will all remember his contribution and arrange a job for a competent



Sohel Rana

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